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MOSCOW AND THE WEST

Napoleon's retreat from Moscow reads like a small and gentle affair in comparison with the horrors which Hitler has inflicted on the troops who obeyed his order not to surrender at Stalingrad. Diaries and letters found on the bodies of German soldiers testify to a despairing realisation of the trap into which the mad ambition of their Führer was leading his faithful people. As the Russian advance continues and its full implications become clear in Germany his people will become less faithful. The speeches of the Nazi leaders on January 30th showed fear and confusion. How far-reaching this crisis is in Germany we cannot yet tell. The leaders of the Reich still hope to stabilise their eastern frontier and, aided by their powerful U-boat campaign, to turn the war into a defence of Germany's Europe against any Allied invasion. Their main propaganda line is designed to frighten anti-Soviet forces within the Western Democracies by urging that the defeat of Germany will lead to the Bolshevisation of Europe. To that propaganda the Premier and President have replied by the "unconditional surrender" declaration of Casablanca, and their promise of new fronts to withdraw German troops from the eastern battlefield.

How necessary such assurances are we can judge from Soviet statements that, so far from German troops being drawn off by the Allies, the fact is that Hitler has recently been able to move a large army from France to the Rostov area. The Russians, who do not easily appreciate problems of sea-power, probably underestimate the value of allied operations which certainly divert a very substantial part of the Luftwaffe to North Africa and Western Europe. But Soviet disquiet is not difficult to understand. The Russians have darkly suspected that Allied intervention is only likely to mature when they have themselves broken German resistance; equally serious, they fear that when the Continent is invaded by the Allied armies the blow may be so delivered as to be indirectly aimed at the Soviet Union as well as Nazi Germany. To many, such suspicions may sound exaggerated; but let us not forget, what no Russian ever forgets, that the last war ended with Allied intervention not in Berlin, but in Archangel.

How far was the Casablanca meeting and Mr. Churchill's subsequent visits to Turkey and Cyprus calculated to produce the confidence which is required between members of the United Nations? If they lead to effective military action of a sort agreed upon with Stalin, we may indeed hope for more unity in the future. Hasty interpreters of Mr. Churchill's visit to Turkey assume that Crete, Salonika or some other point in the eastern Mediterranean comes early in the programme. These are secrets and must remain secrets. All we note is that it is certainly an unusual sign of good will that Mr. Churchill should be able to visit a neutral country accompanied by the C.I.G.S. and a large staff of experts. It is profoundly to be hoped that if plans have been made for striking at this part of the under-belly of the Axis, Stalin has not only been informed, as the Casablanca message states, but persuaded to full agreement. For there is grave danger, reflected in the absence of Soviet representation at Casablanca, that Stalin would see in Allied intervention in the Balkans the intention to build a barrier against Soviet influence in an area where, in any case, the population will look rather to Russia than to the Western Democracies. The example of Yugoslavia, which is discussed on another page of this issue, is not, in this respect, reassuring. It shows that two movements of resistance may co-exist, one looking for support to the West and the other to the U.S.S.R. Such suspicions of Allied intentions in the Balkans have been increased by events in North Africa; it is no longer pretended that the appointment of Darlan was due to military expediency. It seems rather to have been part of a deliberate policy of the State Department, which has in readiness various Darlans, Ottos and other such unrepresentative and dubious personages for the various governments of South-Eastern Europe. Exiled Poles, whose bravery and other fine personal qualities often blind the unwary to their total inability to consider political realities, continuously nibble at the harmony of the United Nations by schemes which cannot be put into effect and which have no other result than to deepen the already intense suspicions of Moscow. The Foreign Office, which in these matters is far more experienced than the State Department, knows well the folly of many schemes which are afoot. Yet Mr. Eden, who has been a steady champion of friendship with the Soviet Union and who is the author of the British-Soviet Alliance, can give in answer to questions in the House of Commons no assurance that the main problems of post-war collaboration (apart from "relief") are being even discussed with the Soviet Union.

No harm can be done by being frank about this issue. It seems possible that Stalin, who will never make peace with Hitlerite Germany, might be satisfied, if he doubts Allied good will, to drive the Germans from Russia and then leave the final defeat of the Germans to us. Again, it is almost certain that, as the Soviet armies advance, the resistance movement in central and south-eastern Europe, will see in the Soviet Union the one hopeful and unifying force. All these peoples are tired of being the catspaws of rival Great Powers; their need is for peasant liberation. On such a question there is every reason to strive for real agreement with the U.S.S.R. The Foreign Office may easily mishandle this situation; its tradition is not to plan anything ahead and to rely on the universal power of British money and the British fleet to improvise when the time comes. This is a most dangerous outlook to-day when British power is still large, but its sphere of influence far more limited. The most foolish policy would be to attempt to interfere in areas where our strength does not enable us to do so with success. In that way we should lose the possibility of friendship with the Soviet Union and we should yield with a bad grace when we might have come to an agreement with credit. Moreover, by failing frankly to discuss these problems of post-war as well as war policy with Stalin we neglect the best chance of a constructive peace, which lies in the development of functional services on the Continent, in the organisation, as Mr. Wallace urges, of joint air services for Europe and the world; in the development of a T.V.A. for the Danube Valley, now widely canvassed in a hundred exciting and constructive enterprises. Here we may have a real hope of collaboration with the Soviet Union, and a chance of a Europe which is not a breeding ground for another war. If that hope is to be realised the solution lies in insisting upon absolutely direct and realistic discussions with Stalin,

Giraud and the State Department

Described astonishingly by President Roosevelt as an "excellent interview," the "explanations" given by General Giraud elucidate a more important enigma than that of the mentality of a professionally distinguished but politically adolescent French soldier. Why, he was asked, had he not purged his administration of Vichyists? The answer was simple: he needed every "able" man who was now ready, irrespective of his past attitude, to support military action against the Axis. Peyrouton was an able man—more "energetic" than Chatel, whom he replaced; and so, to be sure, was Boisson. In short, the Government over which the High Commissioner presides, and which still continues to enforce anti-racial laws, and to imprison in its concentration camps in the Sahara (where conditions are reported to be appalling) anti-Fascist Spaniards, Russians, Poles and Czechs who fought in the International Brigades, consists one and all of "able administrators." Never has political disinterestedness ("I am a soldier, not a politician") worked better to protect and perpetuate reaction. This would not be the name for it in the U.S. State Department. Admiral Leahy, whose views of the "value" of a link with Vichy are on record, would doubtless discern in the "ability" of Peyrouton, Boisson and company a guarantee of law and order; that is, no liberated French territory would be allowed to construe the Atlantic Charter as licence for revolutionary new beginnings. After the war Wall Street may well want to resume business with the Continent; and for its dealings "able" administrations—in other words, Governments who can be relied on to imprison all "agitators" with a strictly non-political strong hand—are essential. When General Giraud was backed for the leadership of the prototype of all future "liberated" Governments in Europe, the officials of the State Department were acting logically. Regarding "radicalism" as the last and worst enemy, they picked a man who could be counted on to see that this war, at any rate, should not be the locomotive of revolution. The Offizier Korps could doubtless provide candidates for a similar role in Germany. That President Roosevelt should countenance the policy revealed by General Giraud is only another disquieting proof of the strength of the reactionary forces within the Democratic Party. The Southern anti-New Deal Democrats on whose support Mr. Roosevelt relies for his precarious majority are behind Mr. Hull and Mr. Welles.

A Christian Voice

A Roman Catholic pulpit is the one place left in Germany in which a man may publicly criticise Nazism, and remain free to do so again. Yet none the less it demands independence of character and great courage for a priest to witness to the principles of the Church in Nazi Germany, and the Bishop of Berlin, Graf von Preysing, showed such courage in his Christmas pastoral letter. It said no word of Nazism directly; but its every sentence was a vindication of the philosophy which totalitarianism denies. The letter was an exposition of the supremacy of the natural law which is identified in theology with the law of God. "Change your mode of thinking," wrote the bishop:

> Right is something which must be enforced even against the interest of the individual and the nation. . . . If power creates and represents right there can be no peaceful communion between individuals or nations, and the fight of all against all will result. . . . No power on earth may venture to force the individual to make declarations or commit acts which would be against his conscience or against the truth. . . . All primeval rights enjoyed by mankind, namely, the right to live, to exist unharmed, to be free, to have preferences, to contract marriage, the existence of which does not depend upon the arbitrary dictum of governments, may not be taken from any one who is not of our blood or of our language.

There, with obvious reference to Nazi treatment of Jews as well as Christians, speaks the Church of the Martyrs, which in the day of Cæsar-worship (which was the early pattern of Fascist political belief) witnessed against the deification of the State, and for the value of the individual. If all churchmen were so brave, the Christian faith would see a revival greater than has been known for centuries; and Preysing does not stand alone. He has fellows, not all of his fold, in many countries of occupied Europe. The pastors of Norway have led their people in endurance.

The Catering Bill

Mr. Bevin's Catering Trades Bill has now been issued; and, in order that there may be no doubt about the Government's attitude, Sir John Anderson, Sir Kingsley Wood and Sir Donald Somervell are among its parliamentary sponsors. Even this, however, does not appear to have caused the opposition led by Sir Douglas Hacking to abandon its efforts; and there will be a good deal more talk behind the scenes before the Bill is actually debated in Parliament. The Bill itself is by no means a drastic measure. It proposes the setting up of a Catering Wages Commission, which is to study the arrangements for the regulation of wages and conditions of employment in the catering trades, and is to recommend the establishment of statutory wage machinery only for those sections of the trades in which the existing arrangements are inadequate and cannot be made adequate. The Commission is to include independent persons in addition to representatives of the interests of employers and workers not directly connected with the trades concerned. The opponents of the Bill take the line that no legislation is necessary, at any rate at the present stage. They say that there ought to be a non-statutory inquiry as a preliminary to the introduction of any Bill, and suggest that anything that turns out to be needed can be done thereafter under the Trade Boards Act without the need for special legislation. In effect, they deny that there is any case for doing anything at all, and assert that conditions are satisfactory in most branches of the trades affected. Actually the industry includes, as well as some big employers, a large number of very small units, and seems plainly to call for a system of regulation more diversified than Trade Board machinery. Mr. Bevin sticks out firmly for his proposed independent Commission.

The C.O.S. Backs Beveridge

The Charity Organisation Society has travelled a very long way from where it stood in the days when it was regarded as the protagonist of voluntary charity against the principle of State action in the field of social service. In its statement issued last week-end, it gave very full support to Sir William Beveridge's proposals, including the reorganisation of industrial insurance as a public service. The C.O.S. nowadays endorses the view that "the community must accept the responsibility for supplying the basic needs of its citizens," and stands for a comprehensive system of public provision for social security in all its forms. Instead of opposing voluntary to State action, it now pleads for giving the trained social worker an important place in the administration of the security services, and for close collaboration between the State and the voluntary agencies in the local working of these services. It advocates the permanent association of citizens' advice bureaux manned by the voluntary agencies with the machinery of local administration; and it wants an organisation of medico-social workers on the lines of the existing almoner service to be attached to the comprehensive health service recommended in the Beveridge Report. These are wise proposals, which will be supported by the great majority of active workers in the social service field; and it is of excellent augury that the Beveridge Plan should have behind it the endorsement of the body which was regarded in the past as the stronghold of the "voluntary" principle.

The Planning of Science

The week-end conference of the Association of Scientific Workers on the Planning of Science was a heartening occasion. Caxton Hall was packed to overflowing, largely by young working scientists. The atmosphere was one of determination to see that science was applied to the fullest degree to the war effort, and that the planning of science should be perfected and continued into the post-war period. Among the outstanding points were, first, the acknowledgment on all hands of the value of operational research for war, and the need for a correspondingly direct liaison between the scientist and the consumer of research in peace—in other words, research inspired by consumer needs instead of by producer profitability. A second was the importance of working scientists and technicians being directly represented on bodies concerned with production and policy at all levels, from Joint Production Committees to the Cabinet Secretariat. Numerous speakers stressed the fact that the main obstacle to a better and a quicker utilisation of science was the cultural barbarism of so many in high places, whether politicians, civil servants, or industrialists, who had no real understanding of the methods, values, or possibilities of science. As Sir Lawrence Bragg said, the scientist should not just be called in as an expert to advise when things went wrong, but as a colleague to help in framing policy. The whole question of a balanced education was thus raised—one in which science should not merely be more heavily represented, but should throughout be related to other human activities. Professor Blackett made an admirable speech, in which, among other things, he suggested that some of the large amount of physical apparatus now in Government research institutions should be given to our own academic physical laboratories, which up till now have been grossly under-equipped in comparison with those in the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R., and some to institutions of learning in occupied Europe.

The outstanding fact, however, was that such a conference could not have been held until quite recently—certainly not two years ago. Many big names would not have attended, or, if they had, would not have spoken as they did; most important, the young men and women from the Government and industrial laboratories of the country would not have flocked to it in their hundreds, and those who came would have been largely critical in a frustrated way, not critical in a positive and constructive spirit. It looks as if there really might be a chance of our developing a modern culture in which science would play its proper part.

Government Policy (*by a Parliamentary Correspondent*)

The House is looking forward to hearing from the Prime Minister at as early a date as is possible a full account of the Casablanca conversations. In the meantime unhappy Eden has been pressed by awkward questions about the Fascist character of the French North African administration. He has been forced to take refuge in pious hopes that the men who fought us in Syria have suffered a change of heart and will collaborate with us now that they occupy the key military positions in North Africa. It is surely surprising that ABCA should encourage the army to discuss this complicated problem whilst Grigg still refuses to remove his ban on talks about the Beveridge Report.

The most important debate this week was initiated by Lord Winterton and supported from a number of quarters on the need for a post-war policy for expanding trade in co-operation with the other United Nations. Winterton dwelt on the danger of inflation, and incidentally strongly backed the Beveridge Report. There was little original in Kingsley Wood's reply; he apologised to a slightly cynical House for drawing his proposals "from the common pool of the ideas of the age." Whilst leaving Dalton to elaborate policy, he committed the Government in principle to an active employment policy; exports must have priority in post-war reconstruction if our standard of life was to be maintained. Government controls would be necessary for some years, and there would be room for both public and private enterprise. How far the Government's policy will be effective cannot be judged, however, until the measures appear which are required for translating these principles into practice.

"UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER"

THE order of the day, "unconditional surrender," that Mr. Roosevelt gave at his press conference in Casablanca, has set many minds reflecting among the United Nations and doubtless in the Axis countries also. How does it work? About the same time, in Libya, General Montgomery supplied us with a working model, from which a good deal may be learned. Who surrendered, in this case? Not Rommel, who got away with his army more or less intact, nor yet the Italian Government. It was the local authorities, the heads of the municipalities and police, who surrendered at Misurata, Homs and Tripoli. The steps that followed were simple and business-like. Some eighty officers had been trained for the task of taking over the administration; presumably they speak Italian or Arabic and understand the system on which this colony was run. The number seems large to manage a population of about 40,000 Italians, and at most 600,000 natives; but it is scattered over a great area; the heads of the Fascist party and administration were interned. The political and cultural activities of the Fascist party were stopped and their centres closed. In the schools the teaching of political economy and Fascist ideology was suspended. Fascist funds in the banks were frozen. Otherwise, the intention is that life shall run on, as far as possible, as before. This means, we take it, not merely that craftsmen, shopkeepers and peasants are encouraged to go about their daily work, but also that churches, mosques and (with the exception noted) schools carry on as usual. Police and municipal services and, we suppose, food-rationing go on as before, under the supervision of our eighty trained officers. Our courts-martial will deal with any future war crimes, such as sabotage, but we infer that the ordinary criminal and civil courts still function. In short, this is a provisional military administration, which postpones and avoids all political issues, save that it has put an end to all the activities of the Fascist party and abolished its authority.

Now let us turn to the parallel case that may confront us, if and when a British or American army takes possession, let us say, of Cologne. In this case also the German army, or part of it, may get away to fight in the interior, and the Nazi Government may still be functioning in Berlin. At this or a later stage a *coup d'état* of the generals or a revolt in the ranks, or even local revolutionary movements, may conceivably happen in the rear. But we will suppose that none of these complications has arisen on the left bank of the Rhine, and that Cologne has been surrendered, as Tripoli was, by its Bürgermeister. Again, the occupying army has its trained officers ready: again the leading Nazis are interned and all Nazi activities brought to an end, including, of course, those of the party house-wardens, who regiment the civil population. Save at the top, we suppose that police, fire-brigade, sanitary service, hospitals and food-rationing would go on as before, under supervision. In schools and colleges lessons touching politics closely, including presumably history, would be suspended. What happens to the press we do not know. Would it be suspended entirely, or produce only a news-sheet under censorship?

The parallel would apply easily enough for a few days or weeks. But with some little acquaintance with both cities, the differences between them soon confront us. Tripoli, as a site, has a history running back to the Greeks, but its continuity has been broken over and over again. Apart from its old Arab and Jewish quarters, this particular city has no history. Its Italian residents are recent settlers. Many are professing Fascists, but the majority are probably neutrals, burdened with few political opinions. Of the peasant settlers many, and of the Arabs most, are illiterate, or nearly so. In this colony there never were parties or Trade Unions. "Believe, obey and fight": so ran the Fascist motto stencilled on the walls. They did not fight; they believed very little, but they did obey. They will continue to obey, and no political problem will arise for some time to come.

Cologne, on the other hand, has a history and tradition that run back without a break to Roman times. Its municipality, even under the Empire, and still more under the Republic, was an active and enlightened body, with much good work to its credit. The Catholic Church is here still the Great Power it always had been. But, side by side with it, up to ten years ago, there were political parties and Trade Unions. Again, Cologne has in and round it great industries, and in the seats of power sit "heavy" industrial barons and bankers. Tripoli has only two or three processing plants, which make olive oil and soap. Clearly, the problem of Cologne is immensely more complicated. Can we, or shall we, keep some of the industries going by supplying raw materials? If we delay in doing this, we risk a repetition of what happened in the winter of 1918-9. Not one factory chimney smoked, and the working population, idle and desperate by no fault of its own, entered the new era in a condition of mental and physical misery. But can work be restarted, even provisionally, until the anxious political problem of German heavy industry has been solved, whether by the Germans or by the United Nations, or by both together? And until it is solved, will the Occupation recognise the "chimney-stack barons" as the Great Powers they were? If it does, it has begun to restore the old fatal balance of class power in this unhappy land, with consequences as fateful for it as for Europe.

Again, the Occupation must foresee that some things are likely to happen in and round Cologne which will never happen in Tripoli. In the factories, or some of them, even before our troops arrive, the older workers, who voted Socialist or Communist only ten years ago, may have already done, secretly or openly, what they or their fathers did in 1918—formed their workers' councils. When the Nazi yoke is broken, will not this process go on, secretly or openly, in the factories or wards of the city, and still more probably in the Ruhr, when that also is occupied? Suppose they get together and form, as they did in 1918, a sort of city soviet? Rather more slowly and more timidly, since they have no tradition of underground work, the remnants of the feeble liberal groups of the Republican era may get together. The Catholics may come together promptly. Big Business is already a sinister force in being.

How will the Occupation deal with this problem? Left to itself, would the instinct of the Higher Command be to suppress any workers' movement at sight? Would not the guidance of civilians of the type which the State Department sent to Algiers reinforce this instinct? Recent experience in Africa obliges us to face this possibility, though we gladly recall the humane and liberal behaviour of the British troops in the Rhineland in 1918, from the generals downwards. It was thanks to them that the food blockade came to an end.

Our purpose is to ask questions rather than to attempt at this stage any dogmatic answer. The phrase "unconditional surrender" rules out some possibilities, but it leaves a great deal in doubt. We will make one positive suggestion —that the period of military occupation should be used to give the Germans their chance, after a mental black-out of ten years, to find themselves again, to discuss their problems freely and to exercise the right of association which the Nazis denied them. Whether this is what the Higher Command intends we do not know. It is one of the things which progressive opinion should certainly demand.

"FULL EMPLOYMENT"—I

NO progress can be made with any plans for reconstruction until the Government makes up its mind on what general assumptions about the future social and economic system its plans are to be based. Is the post-war system to be capitalism, miscalled private enterprise, as we have experienced it in the past, subject only to slight structural changes? In that case any programme of social reform will have to be fitted in, as well as might be, into the old structure. Or is there to be an essentially different structure, resting on different principles and appealing to different motives, or at all events changing the stress laid on various existing motives? Or, again, if we are to live under a "mixed economy," in which capitalism and socialism are somehow blended, what is to be the character of the blend? How much capitalism and how much socialism is there to be?

To state these questions is to see why they are not being answered in any sense that would commit the Government. Any answer would divide deeply what most politicians think of as "the nation"—that is to say, the great contending interests with whose several pulls they have to reckon when they decide on policies and programmes. If the criterion of after the war were really "national unity" in this sense, then clearly one of the three alternative answers must be ruled out absolutely, for it is certain that there are far too many interested parties who will defend the existing order through thick and thin to make possible any agreement to sweep away the existing economic and social system.

That leaves two possible answers, from the Government's standpoint. Logically, the conception of "national unity" ought to rule out the second alternative, for there are far too many people who are discontented with pre-war capitalism for a return to it, without radical modification, to be consistent with anything that can be called national consent. But in practice this alternative is not ruled out, since some people hope to avoid trouble by refusing to decide anything at all that raises awkward issues. It is as dangerous to declare that the pre-war capitalist system is to be restored as that it is to be extensively modified; the one course would antagonise Labour and a large section of the general public, while the other would make an enemy of every threatened vested interest. This is why the Government has no policy about reconstruction. Any possible policy that will not annoy someone the Government is not at present willing to annoy.

Yet here is the rub. The main principles will be decided and many plans made whether the Government proclaims its policy or not. If there is no declaration of Government policy, then every Civil Service department and every important vested interest will draw up its plans (to refrain from planning is in practice impossible) on the assumption that the *status quo ante bellum* is to be restored. This is now occurring almost everywhere; not only among the capitalists, but almost equally among Trade Unionists.

It will be seen that the Government's failure to have a policy exactly suits these vested interests, which are in a position to draw up plans to their own liking within the framework of the pre-war economic system; they will certainly do their best to prevent the Government from declaring any policy. Unless they are exceptionally stupid, they do not want a plain declaration in their own favour; the result would be to rally the opposition demand for a constructive alternative. They want an unspoken assumption, on which civil servants will be compelled to act, that the post-war economic structure will be substantially the same as that of 1939.

Even among those who are generally grouped among the defenders of capitalism, however, there is a considerable and growing number who see the dangers of this way of tackling the problem of reconstruction by not tackling it. The publication of the Beveridge Report has compelled reasonable men to face this issue. Sir William Beveridge has said that his scheme of social security will not work, and by implication that no scheme at all for a prosperous post-war Britain will work, except on a basis of what he calls “full employment.” It is true that Sir William Beveridge's conception of “full employment” is exceedingly modest, for he appears to regard it as consistent with an average level of unemployment that may be as high as 8½ per cent.—surely a greatly excessive allowance, by any reasonable standard of the fractional reserve of labour that the economic system ought to require. But the achievement of “full employment,” even in this very modest sense, raises problems which affect the basic structure of the pre-war economic system. On the lines of Lord Keynes's analysis, which Sir William Beveridge has largely adopted, the key to “full employment” is to keep total investment, which is the most fluctuating factor in demand, at a high and steady level. This, however, cannot be achieved unless the Government (if it assumes the responsibility for maintaining employment, as Sir William proposes it should) is in a position to influence the level of demand for investment goods over a wide enough field to secure the desired balance.

Unless the Government holds this key position, any “Public Works Policy” is bound to degenerate very quickly into something not far removed from “digging of holes in the ground and then filling them up again”; this is the *reductio ad absurdum* of making employment an end in itself, instead of a means to the production of useful things. This was the difficulty which confronted the New Dealers in the United States. They had to find means of offsetting an immense and unprecedented fall in the volume of private investment; but they were not allowed to do this by producing anything which the private capitalist regarded as competitive with their own profit-seeking enterprises. Therefore, in order to “make work,” the Government had to hunt round desperately for things it could do without undue offence to capitalist susceptibilities. Inevitably the supply of such things ran short long before the gap had been nearly filled.

Precisely the same conundrum will face any Government in this country which decides to follow a policy of “full employment” without making any structural changes in the capitalist system. If the State is itself the *buyer* of a large part of the product of the depressed capital-producing industries which it desires to stimulate, the task is easy. It can buy more houses, roads and bridges, railway plant, power stations and electric transmission lines, ships, heavy engineering plant, and so on through the range of products for which the private demand is liable to wide fluctuations. But if the State is not the main buyer, the situation is entirely different; it can then only act upon these industries by inducing the private capitalists to buy more of their products, and that is precisely what, in a depression, they are *ex hypothesi* not willing to do. Along that road one quickly reaches a policy of giving vast subsidies to bolster up private capitalism—subsidies on a scale which no Government would venture to approve—or, in default of such subsidies, either we resort to digging holes in the ground or give up in despair, concluding that mass unemployment is inevitable, and once again make shift with doles.

In truth a policy of “full employment” necessarily involves very considerable changes in the structure of industry; without such changes the State cannot have the effective power to control the volume of investment over a wide enough field to make constructive planning practicable. Only by such an extension of the sphere of public economic activity can we reach the point at which it is possible even to look for an answer to our original problem of a practical blend of capitalism and socialism. Such an answer is assumed in the policy of “full employment,” which is the basis of the Beveridge Report.

Immediately comes the deeper question: Is such a blending of capitalism and socialism workable? We have always argued in this journal that the solution of the problem of unemployment is to be sought in a socialist economic system; and the actual experience of the Soviet Union has very powerfully reinforced this view. That, however, does not absolve us from the duty of considering any practicable half-way house—provided it is on the right road. We are the more prepared to do this because, frankly, we cannot as yet see in this country the constructive forces capable of bringing a fully Socialist system into existence, or of making it work. But will any half-way house work? A scheme can no doubt be worked out logically on paper; but that does not solve the question whether it would work in practice, because it is left uncertain whether it would bring into play the new motives and the new driving force towards productive efficiency which enabled the Russians to perform the economic miracle of the past two decades. However that may be, it is clear that in this country to-day some sort of half-way house is likely to be tried and that in examining any proposal put forward it is first of all important to see whether or not it is a *real* half-way house, and not a mere tinkering with the old system, designed to avoid giving offence to powerful interests.

In a second article, we propose to inquire what changes in the structure of the economic system must be regarded as indispensable if “full employment” is to be maintained and at the same time industry is to follow a policy of high production for the consumers' benefit and be freed from restrictive and monopolistic influences which damp down production and inevitably cause scarcity and poverty, as well as unemployment. These are, of course, two aspects of one and the same problem; we want “full employment” not for employment's sake, but for the sake of being rich rather than poor in real goods and services. We shall have, further, to examine this whole problem in its international as well as its internal aspects; for we want social security and “full employment” not only for ourselves, but for other peoples also; and it is plain that our pursuit of it and theirs will interact and that we shall all be much better placed for reaching our several objectives if we are following broadly similar policies. “Full employment” is a world, and not merely a British, issue; and in our search for social security, if we go about it sensibly, we shall not be trying to feather our own nest, but the world's as well.

OUR ALLIES IN YUGOSLAVIA

[This article is the first of a series of studies of the resistance movement in Europe. The second of the series will deal with Norwegian resistance.]

For the Yugoslavs — Serbs, Croats and Slovenes—the war against the Axis invaders has never ended. They had no chance of putting up any serious resistance to the Axis invasion; the formal conquest was completed in eleven days. Since then the story has been one of confused but continuous guerilla fighting.

No sooner had the German, Italian, Bulgarian and Hungarian troops occupied the country than they set about dividing the spoils between them according to their respective economic and strategic needs. At the same time they played on the traditional political differences in this storm-centre of Europe by appointing various quislings: Ante Pavelitch, a notorious Croat terrorist, was made *gauleiter* of an “independent Croatia” whose storm-troopers, the Ustaci, were later used to massacre the Serbs in Croatia; and an Italian duke its king, although he has never yet set his foot inside his kingdom. A Serb general, long known for his pro-Nazi sympathies, later became head of a government in a much-reduced Serbia. An Italian civil commissioner was sent to Montenegro. The territories were finally demarkated in a series of treaties between the invading countries. These were designed by the Nazis to perpetuate existing frictions and create new ones.

Both invader and quisling, however, were reckoning without the Yugoslav people. Thousands of soldiers escaped into the mountains taking with them their arms and munitions. Teachers and students, engineers and peasants joined them in building up a guerilla army which gained many recruits when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in June, 1941. Guerilla detachments sprang up in many parts of the country often unknown to each other. The movement spread rapidly. Men and women carried out sabotage of war industries; they blew up railway bridges and derailed troop trains. Peasants withheld their grain from the Fascist requisitioners. The German High Command ordered them to burn several hundred metres of cornfields on each side of the railway because guerilla fighters had used the protection of the standing grain for attacking trains. The peasants replied by burning down the whole of their crops.

In Serbia, where the fighting was fiercest, a Serbian officer, Colonel Draza Mihailovitch, previously an instructor at the Military Academy in Belgrade, gathered together a considerable army of Chetniks (Serbian guerillas) and so seriously threatened the Axis forces that in the autumn of 1941 the Germans sent three divisions into Serbia. The B.B.C. and Moscow radio publicised the Colonel, giving him the position of undisputed leadership of the Yugoslav resistance movement.

In January, 1942, the Yugoslav government in London changed premiers, and the resultant balance of forces enhanced the Centralist Serbian influence which, in turn, was reflected in the resistance movement. It was this government which promoted Colonel Mihailovitch to the rank of major-general and appointed him as War Minister. This position he still holds to-day, although the situation in Yugoslavia has developed and radically changed in character. Whilst General Mihailovitch remains with an army in the mountains of Western Serbia and Southern Bosnia, guerilla warfare is going on in increasing strength in Slovenia and Croatia, in Dalmatia and in Montenegro, in areas where he himself is very little known and his activities have rarely extended. He seems to have become increasingly nationalist. The movement which began as guerilla warfare against the Axis invaders has now developed into a liberation movement of peasants with whose democratic aspirations neither the general nor the royal Yugoslav government in London display any kind of sympathy. This seems no reason why the B.B.C. European service should continue to foster the illusion that resistance in Yugoslavia is still united under the general. Far from it. For months past the Swedish press, as well as that of Turkey, America and the Soviet Union, have publicised the conditions amounting to civil war between the forces of General Mihailovitch and the “partisans,” as the peasant guerilla fighters not under his control are called. It is quite incorrect to describe them as “Communists,” though they certainly include many Communists as well as other anti-fascist groups, which naturally regard Russians as “Slav brothers.” Further, there are rumours that some of General Mihailovitch's Chetniks have co-operated with the troops of quisling General Neditch in the ruthless mopping up campaigns against the partisans in Serbia last spring. That a serious situation in the resistance movement has developed in Yugoslavia has been plain for months past. Yet as late as December 12th, 1942, the British War Office suddenly saw fit to send a message through the royal Yugoslav government in London to General Mihailovitch, “who continues to harass the enemy daily and nightly under the most difficult conditions.” Meanwhile, the best-informed sources in Sweden, Turkey and in the U.S.S.R., as well as the Free Yugoslavia radio station, state that General Mihailovitch has been inactive for months,

It is obviously important that this matter should be cleared up. Anglo-American political warfare has produced a queer assortment of Fascist administrators in the first area their forces have invaded, nominally to liberate people oppressed by Axis fascism. Military expediency is a dangerous substitute for political warfare. In Yugoslavia, unlike North Africa, powerful political organisations such as the Croatian Peasant Party, existed before the war, and Dr. Matchek, its leader, has skilfully and persistently ignored all Axis threats and bribes to transfer his allegiance. His members also stand firmly in the resistance movement. To-day, in other words, thousands of people—Croats, Slovenes, Serbs and Montenegrins—are ready to co-operate with an army of liberation. Whilst General Mihailovitch seems to have retired to his stronghold in the mountains between Sarajevo and Belgrade, the partisans have already begun to link up in a great movement which spreads over most of Slovenia, Croatia, Northern and Western Bosnia, Dalmatia and Montenegro.

In Slovenia and Croatia, sabotage and partisan warfare are so widespread that the Italians are reported to be keeping 250,000 men in the area to deal with it. In Serbia, main railway traffic has constantly been interrupted. In Dalmatia, the Italians had to make expeditions from the sea last autumn to tackle the partisans in the coastal mountains. In Bosnia, the partisans control the area between Prozor and Sarajevo, and in Montenegro they have pushed back the Italians into the mountains between Cetinje and Niksic.

The Italians, with 20 divisions garrisoning the country from the Italian frontier to Montenegro, have failed to defeat the resistance movement. Their German ally, with eight divisions in Croatia alone, tried to get the situation in hand in December by taking over the whole Balkan railway system. But sabotage still continues, and the threat to Axis communications is one of the major achievements of the resistance movement. Their support in the event of an invasion of the Balkans is too obvious to need explanation, as is their contribution to the defeat of the Axis powers.

But the continuation of the present official policy in collaboration with the royal Yugoslav government, consisting mainly of the court and military clique of the pre-war period, can only prejudice the faith of those who are real allies of democracy in Yugoslavia. We have already seen the effects of choosing Fascists as our allies in North Africa. We cannot afford Darlanism, or an "Imperial Council" in the Balkans. A drastic reversal of policy is needed. Co-operation in political warfare between London, Moscow and Washington is essential. Nothing less than this can convince the allies in occupied countries that the armies of liberation mean to co-operate with them in the construction of a new Europe.

A LONDON DIARY

Public imagination has naturally been captivated by the Mosquito raid which was nicely timed to arrive in Berlin for the official speeches of the Nazi leaders. Just the right moment. These bombers appear to have hedge-hopped into Germany—I notice that a pilot speaks of rising to the required height to drop his bombs—and to have arrived over Berlin almost unannounced. The confused noises that could be heard on the air were probably not bombs, but the shifting of chairs and boots when the audience received orders to retire to a shelter. The raid certainly added to an already existing confusion. One's fancy plays with the reasons that may have kept Hitler from speaking in person. Perhaps all the available carpets were bitten through, and Hitler was left gnawing his own moustache, and therefore could not talk? Perhaps he was just so worried (as he was once before during the army purge when he disappointed his expectant public) that he could not work himself up to the pitch of oratory. Anyway, his proclamation proved to be a jejune affair without a flash of inspiration in it. Not one intuition. Goebbels read it after his own speech had been interrupted by a demand for Hitler's own words. All three speeches were haunted by a single question. How is it now supposed that Germany will win the war? Goebbels had no answer except, in effect, that the Führer was a magician. Göring's speech, on the other hand, was a very powerful performance. It maintained the confidence and geniality, as well as the ruthlessness, which have made him popular. He jeered at himself and the Nazi leaders as a whole for being deceived by Stalin's smart trick (!) of pretending to be weak in the Finnish campaign—as good a get-out as another. In the main it was a backs-to-the-wall speech. Its gist was the familiar appeal to America not to aid in destroying the Germans and so passing Europe over to the Bolsheviks. One other significant point is worth noticing in each of the three speeches. They all emphasised that Hitler had come to power legally; he had been appointed Chancellor by the President in a constitutional way. Why this harping on so remote a piece of history? Clearly because Conservative circles, which in Germany would be specially influenced by the constitutional argument, are becoming restive and critical of the Führer's handling of the Russian campaign. Göring's speech was a masterly affair, which plainly marked him as the Führer's successor if there were a palace revolution in Germany. That becomes more possible every day that the Soviet Army continues to advance.

* * *

A friendly and simple-minded Pole sends me a reproachful letter because I praised the Archbishop of Canterbury for reminding us to ask ourselves whether in the totalitarian conditions of present Germany we should all be braver than the German Bishops in denouncing the crimes of the Nazis. My correspondent points to the comparative strength of the protests in occupied countries as proof of the peculiar cowardice of the Germans. That is exactly to miss the point. It would indeed be strange if no brave voices were raised in the Church in France, Belgium and Holland when the foreign conqueror tramples on his victims. The Archbishop's point was the terrible strength of nationalism. The cruelty of the foreign tyrant is obvious to all; it is the cruelty of one's own national thugs, supported always by the specious justification of national security or military necessity, that it is hard to name and denounce. In a totalitarian country to make such a protest is literally the last act any man can perform. Let me ask my simple-minded correspondent a question. Some years ago peculiarly horrible atrocities were carried out in the Ukraine by the Polish Government. They are beyond dispute; they were fully investigated by Mr. F. A. Voigt, then on the *Manchester Guardian*. At real risk to himself he defied the Polish authorities and actually took revolting photographs of the bodies of Ukrainian villagers who had been beaten by Polish soldiers. Now did the Polish Bishops protest against these cruelties? I hope so; they had not the excuse that Poland was completely totalitarian, nor was it at war. These Bishops would not have been killed if they had protested. Perhaps they did; I do not recall it. I assume that my correspondent did. His case falls to the ground if he did not. I am not suggesting that any barbarism has equalled Nazi barbarism, nor am I underestimating the brutality of the German military tradition. But I know that if sanity is not to die in the world it is the duty of everyone of adult mind to recall to a society that is every day less rational and more national that cruelty is no nation's speciality; it has been the ghastly characteristic of unbridled power in every land and throughout the ages. There are conditions in which it flourishes; there are others in which it decreases.

* * *

Talk with Mr. Kershner, who has been working for the American Friends' Service Committee as Director of Relief in Europe, has convinced me, as well as many others in this country, that the case for allowing food into France and Belgium is now unanswerable. A hundred thousand French children have been looked after by this Committee ever since the armistice. Mr. Kershner described to me what is perhaps the most ghastly thing in modern war—the unbearable tragedy of growing children who lose weight every week, who develop tuberculosis and rickets, who faint with hunger at school, whose legs become sticks and whose bellies swell into drums. I believe I still have somewhere famine photographs taken in Europe after the last war. They have haunted my mind ever since. To take away the food from children who have been fed by the Friends because the Germans have occupied France would be wicked. None of the arguments that have made Britain timorous of giving navicerts for food to occupied Europe need in this case trouble us. All the food that goes is eaten by the children; there are no stocks for the Nazis to seize. The children have it in addition to the rations allowed by the Germans, and none is taken out by the Nazis to replace that which is brought in. The problem of shipping space is solved, since Swedish vessels are chartered; they could not be used for military purposes in any case. The arrangements are made through Switzerland. This feeding has nothing to do with the dubious politics that put us all off Hoover's proposals in 1940–41: what has been done with only good results in Greece has also been done by Americans in France; it should be continued and extended when possible to Belgium and then Holland and Norway. Very important from the military point of view is the fact that we call ourselves liberators and rely on a welcome in occupied Europe. People who are hungry grow weak and may give up and turn into collaborators with the occupying Power. The capacity to bring food is our greatest single propaganda asset. Mr. Kershner told me how, after vitamins were distributed in France, French girls wore the wrappers as bows in their hair. The wrappers said "This came for the children of France because the people of America love them." That is a pledge for the future.

* * *

Another group of Indian technicians is returning to India after a period of technical training in England. The scheme, you remember, has throughout been sponsored by Mr. Bevin, and I see that he has made another most intelligent speech to the most recent batch of fifty trained men. He has always, and quite rightly, seen the main problem of India as economic; he must also know that there is no economic without a political solution. The training of these men is in itself something of a landmark for India. It is impossible, if we are training technicians, that we should continue to prevent India from developing her own industries. Here they are, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsees living and working together under modern factory conditions. (There are some admirable photographs of them at work in the beautifully produced 1s. pamphlet called *Indian Crisis*, which appears in the March of Time series.) Caste and religion prove no obstacle. Where difficulties arise for these trainees, it is not between Indian and Indian but between Indian and European. In England such difficulties are slight; they arise only from different customs. Conceptions, for instance, of cleanliness. I heard of one trainee who turned sick at what appeared to him the horribly unclean sight of a woman using the same knife first to cut bread and then to cut a bandage with which she was dressing a wounded leg. More serious, of course, may be difficulties in India if men, who have known the equality of a British factory, find themselves regarded as inferiors by Anglo-Indians.

* * *

What has happened to the Labour delegation which the Executive promised the Party Conference last Whitsun should go to Moscow for the purpose of discussing the future relations of British and Soviet workers? I should be surprised to hear that obstacles to this project have been raised by the Soviet Government.

Walking through Lincoln's Inn Fields in the lunch hour I saw 10 yards away from each other two rival speakers. The first was a red-faced man with a beard, who had a stand labelled "Economic League." At one time he had a solitary listener; then he was left to throw his pearls unheeded into the puddled road. On the other stand there was a girl with a pre-Raphaelite head talking to a substantial crowd. She was saying, when I arrived, that the Christian way of life involved a fair standard of living for everyone. A rude man in the front was interrupting, but the crowd took her side. She said she did not mind whether we had Capitalism or Socialism; what mattered was freedom from the insecurity of the wage system. The man remarked facetiously that it could not be Socialism then because there would not be any wages under Socialism. I deduced that the single listener at the shrine of the Economic League must have decided that interruption at the rival meeting would be more fun. As I turned away the girl was still very earnestly denouncing poverty as unchristian, and the red-faced man was still saying something inaudible to the air. The education of the British for the post-war years has definitely begun.

* * *

A speculative observer of tendencies in England to-day might say that if the Russians continue their triumphant advance and the Allies continue to back reactionary forces in occupied countries, some very remarkable changes will take place in this country. Many who now demand the destruction of Germany will become equally anxious to stabilise a Conservative regime in Berlin lest Bolshevism spread, while Second Fronters must surely find themselves holding mass meetings in the Stoll with the slogan "Hands off Europe."

* * *

This week's best comment reaches me in four lines:

Global war and global peace,
Global measures for lend-lease;
Nothing now delays the plan
But the birth of Global Man.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to P. J. Rawlings.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Passionately alive, imaginative writer seeks accommodation with running water; and other interior fittings would be appreciated.—*Richmond and Twickenham Times.*

Sir Stafford Cripps, Minister of Aircraft Production, yesterday said: "The other day when I visited a large factory in the North, I took the liberty of starting my speech with the word 'Comrades.' The chairman of the firm has now written to me telling me I should have used the phrase 'Ladies and gentlemen.'"—*Sunday Pictorial.*

. . . the Enforcement Committee had received an application from Major Everard Gates, M.P., for a licence to have a pig killed. The licence was sent, but when returned it was found the name of the slaughterer had been omitted, and the premises on which the pig was to be slaughtered had not been stated. A letter was sent to Major Gates pointing out the omissions, and in his reply he said, "As I have practically cut my teeth on lions, elephants and suchlike, the dispatch of a pig presented no particular problem, and needless to say as I intended to consume it myself the deed was carried out under the most hygienic and sanitary conditions."—*Farnham Herald.*

Proof of birth should be securely pinned between pages 2 and 3 of this form.—Extract from an Army Application Form.

BIG STEAMERS, 1939-1943

AFTER RUDYARD KIPLING

"OH, where are you going to, all you big steamers,
Escorted in convoy across the salt sea?"
"We're going to fetch you supplies and munitions,
Your grain and your petrol, your meat and your tea."

"And when will you come again all you big steamers,
And how do you beat off the submarine pack?"
"We're sitters for U-boats across the Atlantic,
And more than a few of us will not get back."

"But what are they doing to guard you big steamers,
And how goes the day in the war undersea?"
"You'd better go ask of the U-boat Committee,
And you'd best go inquire of the Admiralty."

"But if anything happens to all you big steamers
If you should be lost up and down the salt seas?"
"Well that is the end of our rough island story,
Not to speak of your mutton, your loaf and your cheese."

"Then what can we do for you, all you big steamers,
Who bring us our coffee, our bacon and wheat?"
"You can send us more bombers and fighters and carriers,
You can build us corvettes and a fast merchant fleet."

"Goodspeed and goodspeed to you, all you big steamers,
We'll see that they safeguard your seamen and freight."
"The U-boats are straddled across England's lifeline,
So you'd better look sharp or it may be too late."

SAGITTARIUS

ON SPECIALISATION

IT is a conception which grows increasingly familiar as civilisation advances and the world grows older and worse. What does it denote? Being immersed in details, accumulating facts but failing to see their implications, being conscious of trees but not of woods, knowing—I had hoped to avoid it, but the phrase simply refuses to be left out—more and more about less and less?

Opposed to it is the bird's eye or synoptic view that perceives relations without inspecting too closely the nature of what is related; that is aware of relevance, and constructs a perspective within which the 'relevants' can be arranged according to a scale of importance; that is concerned to discern the pattern of the whole rather than to inspect the details of the parts; that sees things, accordingly, not through a microscope but from an aeroplane and, so seeing them, connects what it sees.

Specialisation in the shape of an over-exaggerated concern with the minutiae of manner, coupled with an indifference to matter, is a time-honoured dweller in the world of scholarship and has discouraged deserving dons from publishing books by engendering the conviction that a plan for a new model of the universe will induce in one's contemporaries no more active response than a bored animadversion upon the misplacing of a semi-colon. It is, however, most familiar in the sciences, and most prominent in those which are furthest advanced. A scale of the sciences might be constructed according to the increasing intensity of the student's scrutiny into a subject matter of increasingly restricted scope. On the lowest rung of the ladder is physics, the most advanced of the sciences. Given a mastery of his tools, observation, experiment and mathematics, the physicist can pursue his subject unaffected by other disciplines and insulated from other scientists. (I say advisedly "can", not "does". Of recent years physicists have shown an increasing disposition to take cognisance of philosophy, but this disposition is unfortunate rather than necessary.) On the rung above physics is chemistry. The chemist must know at least some physics; must, therefore, enlarge his view to embrace results other than his own; on the next might be placed bio-chemistry; on the next biology, on the next psychology. As one ascends, the view widens, the workers on each rung embracing in their purview the area tilled by the worker below and needing, if they are to do their own work, some acquaintance with his results. When we come to sociology, we begin to leave the realm of science proper, and require, in addition to a knowledge of biology and psychology, some politics, some economics, some history, some anthropology, even, it may be, a little philosophy. At the top of the ladder is philosophy. The scope of the philosopher's interest is the widest, his knowledge the least specialised; his concern is less with results than with their correlation, less with facts than with their meaning; he must take all the field of human experience for his province, art as well as science, religion as well as politics, so that pooling the results, correlating the facts, he may put to himself the question: "the reports presented by the scientists being such and such—and I have no competence to question them, I accept them as given—the deliverances of moral and religious experience being so and so, the teaching of history being thuswise, what ground plan of the universe and, more particularly, of the meaning and significance of human life within the universe, am I entitled to draw up?" The philosopher, then, like the Cabinet Minister, is the arch-synoptic. It is his job to assess the significance of results which others have reached, and to pronounce upon matters of which others know more than himself. One can see why Plato held that philosophers should be kings. . . .

These are generalisations which it would be pleasant to develop. The temptation must be resisted, since my purpose is to apply them to the politics and administration of the war. I begin by observing that they produced the postulates from which our Civil Service sprang. The Civil Service was conceived primarily as a team of non-specialists and non-experts. The training required to pass a man into the Home Civil and, more particularly, the Oxford Greats school, was dictated by the assumption that the highest education was achieved by those who succeeded in delaying for as long as possible the warping of the intelligence by concentrating it on a special line. Understanding everything, the ideally educated man knows nothing or, rather, he acquires such knowledge as he may happen to want as easily as possible and disembarrasses himself of it as rapidly as possible. What was sound in this tradition was its realisation of the importance of the synoptic view. It entailed as a corollary that a good administrator is one who is able to give sensible orders to those who know more about the facts of the case than he does himself.

But the Civil Service was born in a comparatively unspecialised age, whereas ours is one of high and increasing specialisation. Specialisation, as I have remarked, has gone farthest in science; and science has formed the climate of our age, with the result that our minds are pigeon-holed into specialised compartments. The age of the educated man who took all knowledge for his province died with the 18th century.

It is inevitable that this pervasive feature of the climate of the age should be reflected in the mirror of the war. Let me illustrate. It has been frequently pointed out that the new departments tend to be staffed not with Civil Servants but with experts and, the higher the post, the more expert and, therefore, the more specialised the holder. Thus, sugar control is run by sugar merchants; shipping control by shipowners. Inevitably the different Controllers and their departments fail to understand one another; being experts, they do not speak the same language. The various Commissions and Com-

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mittees which the government sets up to devise a policy for this, that and the other are manned by experts. Thus the Committee appointed to advise the Minister of Works and Planning consists of architects, geographers, planners and economists. From reports, it seems unlikely that they have enough common ground to form an adequate basis for fruitful co-operation.

The "Second Front" controversy was haunted by the fear that exclusively military considerations were being allowed to decide an issue to whose right determination political considerations were relevant. Thus, it might have been desirable to have ventured upon a European landing, even if the chances of military success had been comparatively small, because of overriding psychological and political considerations. The fear was that sufficient weight had not been given to these considerations; that the decision in other words had been taken by military specialists.

More particularly in the early days of the war, the claims made by the army upon man-power were paramount. Instead of a clearing house to which different demands should be brought, sifted and given each its due weight by a synoptic authority biased in favour of none, there was only the single clamorous voice of the Forces; hence coal-miners were converted into potato peelers and, like a parasite too strong for its host, the army was in a fair way to destroy the very industries upon which it fed. To-day, very late in the day, Mr. Bevin makes gallant and let us hope successful essays to treat the problem synoptically.

Criticism of Mr. Churchill's leadership has centred upon his tendency to by-pass the War Cabinet—it is, we have been led to suspect, a body which instead of co-operating to decide, sits to register decisions which have already been taken—and to deal directly with the executive heads of the Forces. Mr. Churchill, no doubt, is in a synoptic position but, instead of hammering out a policy with the aid of other synoptics, he looks exclusively to the specialist. Moreover, as de Gaulle has recently pointed out, the heads of States engaged in modern war are not primarily to be conceived as commanders, entrusted with the final decisions on military strategy, but as leaders of peoples concerned to express their aspirations, to symbolise their determination and to maintain their morale. Such was Mr. Churchill's rôle in 1940, but it is permissible to ask whether the refusal to state detailed war aims and the soft pedalling of political warfare may not be the results of a too specialised conception of the way in which the war should be conducted and of the functions of the leader who conducts it.

I do not know that the defects I have diagnosed are precise enough to call for a remedy. Besides there is no new remedy; there are only the time-honoured pre-suppositions of our democratic faith. They are emphatically non-specialist pre-suppositions. Decisions should be taken by a Parliament consisting of non-specialist representatives of non-specialist citizens. The Cabinet is a committee of Parliament. The Cabinet takes its decisions on the basis of specialist reports by those who know more about the facts than it does itself, rightly, since occupying the top-most rung of the ladder, it is in a position to take a synoptic view of the connection between the specialist reports. The decision, what to do, once taken is referred to the specialist to execute and in the further decisions as to its execution—how to do it—the synoptic does not presume to interfere. Such, it seems to me, are the non-specialist pre-suppositions of democracy, from which we depart at our peril.

C. E. M. Joad

ADVERTISED GOODS.—The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

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PRIDE AND PREJUDICE, 1943

(An open letter to a Chorus-girl.)

My dear Chorina,

There is something I want to tell you, and there is something I hope you can tell me with regard to the question of Sunday opening of theatres.

I write to you and not to the more famous opponents of the proposal, because in England it is the working rank and file (and Heaven knows you do work hard keeping yourself fit for your job!) who show the leaders (in our profession sometimes too ready to bask in applause at the expense of their job) what needs to be done. But you are usually too busy to consider suggestions until they threaten to affect you personally, and then, because you have not thought about it much before, you listen to people who express themselves more brilliantly than you and I, but who for various reasons are not always accurate.

As proof of this: You, or maybe your sister, recently said, "We shall do all we can to resist the seven-day week. Some of the girls are married, and Sunday is the only day their husbands can get leave from the Forces."

Now that first sentence about resisting the seven-day week shows, my dear, that you repeat a parrot-cry because you do not listen to what is said to you. At the Saville Theatre meeting the wording of the proposal for Sunday opening showed that a six-day week was a *sine qua non* (and Mr. Leslie Henson made it clear to all but cloth-ears) and later, when you and others had already left (and, my dear, you prolonged the meeting by barracking all with whom you disagreed), Mr. Henson announced that the West End Managers and the Theatrical Managers Association also guaranteed a six-day week in the event of Sunday opening.

You may reply—because when we are intensely interested we all forget both facts and manners—"What guarantee is that?" You distrust both the Managers and the Equity Council, but remember that Council was chosen by you, me and others, and we are surely strong and vocal enough to ensure that any promise shall be fulfilled. As for those wicked fairies, the Managers, we have their signatures to their promise.

But even if the Council, the Managers and we ourselves failed to stop a seven-day week, it would not be allowed by law. If you have read your papers recently, you will have seen that a firm has been prosecuted for employing girls on a Sunday as well as on weekdays.

A seven-day theatre week is a bogy, and I am surprised that the leading opponents allow it to terrify—I say "allow" because I cannot believe that Mr. Nicholas Hannen, Mr. Leslie Banks, Mr. Hartley Power, Miss Athene Seyler, Miss Jean Cadell, Miss Peggy Ashcroft would deliberately encourage an enthusiasm based on an untruth.

The second sentence comes from the heart, and normally would carry some weight: put in the form "one would like to see one's friends on Sunday," it is the reason given to me by Mr. Power before the Saville meeting began. But would that be listened to from soldiers, war-workers or evacuees far from their homes? Should it then excuse actors from working, if the public should need them? Are actors now so exceptional that their personal feelings should overrule their duties? Are they now frailer than Samuel Phelps, who used to walk to see his wife

> "over Leeds bridge every Saturday night as soon as the play was over, and got to York as the Minster bells were calling to church on Sunday morning, and as regularly as the bells tolled twelve on Sunday night . . . walked back to Leeds, arriving just in time for Monday morning rehearsal?"

Or than Charles Godfrey, "who would study night and day to make his impersonations . . . exact in every detail"? Or the first George Formby with his brave "Coughing better to-night?" Are they now so effete that without Sunday at their country cottage they cannot cope with the rest of the week?

Were you not the other day inclined to argue as if all actors were West-end actors living no farther from London than Muswell Hill? The majority of actors are on tour, and it is as farcical to suggest for them a social Sunday as to suggest for the army in the Middle East a week-end at Blackpool. They travel on Sundays, arriving when shops are shut; for a meal they are often forced into expensive hotels; it then takes from Monday to Thursday to establish that their show is worth seeing. If they travelled, say, on Thursday, the week would start with good houses and the companies could easily attend Divine Service on Sunday, which now they cannot.

But I don't want to stress the advantages Sunday opening would bring the theatre; that is where, Chorina, we have all gone wrong. You realise, don't you, that this recent agitation for Sunday opening started from a growing public demand? Is it not our duty to fall in with the wishes of the public, irrespective of our wishes? In the seventeenth century plays took place in the afternoon, then the demand grew for evening performances, and later for matinées as well. Do you think the present times of opening were due solely to A.R.P. regulations? The Government could have forbidden all entertainment, but the public needed it and needed it earlier than usual. If the public demands Sunday theatres it is not for us, either as servants of the public or as patriots, to refuse to comply.

As for those with a Sabbatarian conscience (who are entitled to great respect) do you not think they ought to leave a profession which may entail Sunday duties? All public services work on Sundays. You would quote Miss Seyler: "Bus-drivers work on shifts." True, but ask Miss Seyler if she knows what such shifts mean in hours.

So much for what I have to tell you. Now for what I want you to tell me. What other reasons are there against Sunday opening?

At the Saville Theatre I only heard the above three—the fear of the seven-day week (which is nonsense), the desire to see one's friends (which is selfish) and the Sabbatarian view (which should mean a change of profession if Sunday theatres are needed). No other reason, unless I was as inattentive as many others at that meeting, was given.

What are Mr. Leslie Banks's reasons? An ardent opposer, he is now performing in the radio show "War and Peace"—two hours broadcasting on Sunday. Why? For cultural reasons, and therefore unpaid? In that case he is underselling other actors. And would he not broadcast on Sundays if he were acting on weekdays?

He and the others who have resigned from Equity Council over this question—Mr. Hannen, Miss Seyler, Miss Cadell—have had numerous opportunities to attack the proposal since 1931, when Equity adopted Sunday opening as a policy. Mr. Hannen did unswervingly, but did the others who are now theatrical champions? And how many meetings of the Council did Mr. Leslie Banks and the rest attend?

One warning. Because you, Chorina, are so kind-hearted, Mr. Owen Nares and Mr. Ernest Thesiger and others propose that theatres should be open on Sundays for free shows. Such patronising charity is not wanted by an audience of all classes which would rather see a good show paid for than a slovenly show free, and, as Miss Ashcroft said, this would mean slovenly performances, for—here comes the paradox—by inspiring you to support free Sunday shows the leading opponents of the Sunday opening scheme are thereby ensuring the actual existence of the bogy they cry out against—the seven-day week. If free Sunday shows are allowed, it will be invidious, unpatriotic and wrong to refuse to give them, and you, my dear Chorina, will be forced to perform seven days a week and—what is important—for only six days' pay, and that is surely worse than a six-day week with Sunday opening.

I am,
Your staunch admirer,
Dennis Arundell

THREE CONCERTS

On January 23rd the Royal Philharmonic Society gave a performance (the first since the addition of the fugato) of Alan Rawsthorne's Symphonic Studies for orchestra. If the British Council seriously desires to give foreign countries an idea of the renascence that is going on among English composers, it could hardly do better than record this enthralling work, which, rather than a set of variations, is really a kind of symphonic poem without a literary programme. The conception is large, the idiom complex but thoroughly intended and never disagreeable, the emotion vigorous and lofty. The Albert Hall played its usual part of Bad Fairy, obscuring as much of the detail as possible; even so, the extreme beauty of sound that distinguishes some sections of the work did reach us across the great open spaces.

On the following day the first of three concerts at the Wigmore Hall displayed, as well as may be, the peculiar virtues of French music. The unbroken flow of Fauré's style—which, in its dissimilar way, recalls the mortised sequences of contrapuntal music—shows to perfection in the lovely Piano Quartet in G minor (a much finer work, incidentally, than the earlier and more popular Quartet in C). A distinguished team of performers, which included Kathleen Long, Eda Kersey and Sidney Griller, made the most of such moments as the end of the Adagio, but took the opening Allegro in too gingerly a fashion. This music is exquisite, but not brittle, and it loses some of its quality if not played with considerable *Schwung*.

I have few recent memories more absolutely pleasurable than Maggie Teyte's singing of Chausson's "Chanson Perpétuelle." This chaste but passionate *scena* is perhaps the best indication of what Chausson might have developed into if that bicycle had not done him to death at the age of 44. In this work, and in the Fauré songs which followed it (not, however, among the composer's best), flowers the French tradition of elegance in style and feeling, and that perfect tact in intercourse between artist and audience which has since been lost. Chausson's Double Concerto, which closed a most distinguished programme, is a fine, thoughtful work in which, however, the influence of Franck is rather too obvious. In any case it seemed a mistake to place so long and complicated a piece at the end of a concert—as the audience evidently thought.

In the world of music-making as it is in 1943, the latter concert was an agreeable exception; but one has, fortunately, quite frequent occasion to thank God for Walter Goehr. Particularly at the present moment, for the chamber orchestra he has collected and regimented now forms an instrument of expression more homogeneous and flexible than anything else of its kind in the country. Mr. Goehr is a most unselfish conductor, and gets his deserts in a response remarkable for exactitude and richness of tone. The strings, most capably led by Maria Lidka (herself an excellent soloist) were thoroughly put through their paces, on January 30th, by Howard Ferguson's arrangement of Bach's *Ricercar* from "The Musical Offering." This must be one of the most sumptuous and majestic pieces of contrapuntal writing in existence; on this occasion one lost neither the general effect of grandeur nor the subtleties of modulation. After Mozart's enchanting, but rather long, Divertimento in D (K334) (the final Rondo was clearly intended to accompany conversation) we heard Benjamin Britten's settings from Rimbaud's "Les Illuminations" sung, not as before by Sophie Wyss, but by Peter Pears. The change of singers was a clear gain: Mr. Pears got right inside the poems and gave a performance of astonishing brilliance, distinguished by sensibility and brio. He now only needs to acquire a certain roundness of tone, and to "throw" his voice farther, to be able to cope with larger halls. The orchestra too did very well by these beautifully chiselled songs, which include a wide range of feeling. The work as a whole is fascinating and in the best sense picturesque—as the poems require it to be. Britten has here recaptured to a high degree that tact, as between composer and audience, which I spoke of just now as having been lost. A first hearing will probably seize most readily on the Latin grace of "Antique" and the romantic beauty of "Being Beauteous"; but the cold, yet perfectly satisfactory counterpoint of "Interlude" has, I think, at least as much intrinsic beauty and an effectiveness which comes from being put in exactly the right place. It may be mentioned in passing that this composer's love of ending his movements by gradually dissolving the rhythm and the figure which he happens to have in hand, into rest and silence, may, if abused, degenerate into a tiresome mannerism.

The concert ended with Stravinsky's "Dumbarton Oaks" Concerto. I was left with a certain unwilling respect for this forbidding work, but cannot pretend that it gave me much pleasure. It does not do to forget that, in spite of some twenty-five years of exile, Stravinsky is in fact a Russian; which to some extent explains the hard-featured wind from the Kalmuck steppes which blows through the arbitrary rococo of this concerto. No one would care to deny Stravinsky's mastery of his own rebarbative style, but to what end is it here used? This heartless, tyrannical music borrows a diction which it seems unable to pronounce: it is futile to mark a passage *grazioso* if your harmony and instrumentation in fact preclude this effect—a fact fully realised by another master of the genre: Hindemith. Like flowers at the bottom of a paperweight, Stravinsky's later music is insulated from any atmosphere through which its message could conceivably be carried. One is left wondering uncomfortably what it is all about. A composer's communications with God should be, I seem to feel, by way of his audience. Mr. Goehr gave a forceful, rather German performance of the work, which, if it underlined the barbarisms, also preserved the listener's attention.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"The Thirteen," at the Tatler

"The Moon and Sixpence," at the Odeon

"Mr. and Mrs. America," March of Time

The Thirteen, another film of desert warfare, was shown last week just too late to be bracketed with *Nine Men*. It must be admitted that the Russian film has the advantage of grander scenery and a more dramatic story and, so far as anything individual in the cinema survives, its survival value is probably greater. The desert in this case is Asia; photography has made the most of sunlight, sky and sand—footmarks in the sand, scallop shapes of sand-hills, sand pouring momentarily like water where it has been disturbed and then closing up again. The camera is handled here more sensitively and generously than in recent Soviet productions (this one dates back several years), and one device which has almost vanished from the talkie world is brilliantly recaptured—the use of silence. Soldiers peer down into a well where one of them is looking for water; it comes at last in single drops from a wicker ceiling, and every drop can be heard in the silence. A sand storm, a soldier who continues talking over his shoulder to a fallen comrade, a man going mad with thirst: the tempo of such sequences is admirably gauged to tell a story dramatically yet without over-emphasis. The thirteen of the title are ten soldiers going on leave, a commander and his wife, an elderly professor; they are attacked by bandits, a couple of hundred strong, and only two of the party survive, to be rescued by a cavalry patrol. The whole film has a dramatic unity that reminds one of the palmy days of Soviet films before Socialist realism and the sound-track broke down epic outlines. In fact, its appeal is universal, and it makes me wonder how our own *Nine Men*, moving though it is, would strike a Russian audience. The Russian brand of character seems easier of export.

Somerset Maugham's *The Moon and Sixpence* has been made into an unusual, though not an unusually good, film. It is certainly breaking new ground to put on the screen a painter who talks and behaves like one, and Maugham's dialogue and characterisation, agreeably undiluted, will come as a shock to film-goers. George Sanders gives a commendably harsh performance in a Gauguin-like role, and Herbert Marshall as the fascinated and appalled biographer, provides a bridge to the understanding of genius. It is as well, by the way, that Strickland's canvases all have their backs to the camera, but then, just before the end, we are given an eyeful of his Tahitan period, in hideous technicolour. One misses, too, the sardonic epilogue in which Mrs. Strickland paints a rosy picture of her married life.

In *Mr. and Mrs. America* the March of Time gives an impression of activities on the home front. Women workers, war savings, free speech, military training in schools, drives against the Black Market, voluntary work in hospitals: the people of "Middletown" are shown busily at work, and if the picture is not very exciting, that is the fault of Time, which marched here a couple of years before crossing the Atlantic. Once more the finger points at crowded car parks, factory hands easing off, the rumour-monger; and the word "Sabotage" has a more urgent sound in American than in English accents. Anti-sabotage patrol is the new name for Home Guard, and there is even an organisation for tracing rumours to their source. Let's hope it works better than our own sad Mr. Sensibles.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Correspondence

MUST WE LOSE THE PEACE?

SIR,—Those of us who remember the disappointment and disillusion that followed the last war have read Michael Straight's article and your comments on it with reasonable apprehension. It is abundantly clear that opposition to any attempt fundamentally to change the social and industrial order is already being carefully prepared. The speeches of the chairmen at the recent annual meetings of the banks and the statement issued by the 120 industrialists are the indication of the line the opposition will take, and that it will be most intelligently directed.

It is therefore of the greatest urgency that some way should be found to mobilise all the forces of revolutionary social progress. For many reasons I do not believe that the Labour Party alone can defeat the reactionaries. It needs the co-operation of the Aclandites, whose importance is, I think, much underrated, the thousands of Christians influenced by Dr. Temple and Malvern and, of course, the Communists.

There should now be joint action to compel the Government to implement the Beveridge Report. But that is only the preliminary to what should be the struggle for far more drastic ends. SIDNEY DARK

Savile Club.

[We cordially agree. Our point was that in the circumstances the best technique for developing a movement to support a constructive peace was to begin by concentrating on a specific issue which would at the outset unite as many people as possible.—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—Naval officers are usually credited with more bluff than brain and it is for this reason that I have never dared to criticise before.

But Michael Straight's article, "Will we lose the peace again?" sends out a danger signal too real to be ignored.

The lack of unity on the Left should be the despair of every Progressive. Shinwell and Bevan almost alone face the enemy. Priestley and Bartlett steer away from Acland, whose own course is somewhat independent. Many thousands of escorts are waiting if only the convoy will assemble. No wonder the Tory U-boat continues to thrive.

LIEUTENANT R.N.

UNIFORMED BULLYING

SIR,—The letter you published from Mr. Cyril G. Naylor, who had to produce his identity card in a public lounge to an army officer who "didn't like the tone of his conversation," illustrates what must happen when you put half the adult male population into uniform and give it minor inquisitorial powers over the other half, but his experience prompts one or two observations that may be of general interest.

Mr. Naylor says he understands that the Lieutenant-Colonel was "fully entitled by law to act as he did," but this is by no means beyond doubt. The National Registration Act empowers "a Constable in uniform" (whether he is "on duty" or not) to require the production of an identity card; and supporting Regulations confer similar powers upon "any member of H.M. naval, military, or air forces in uniform on duty." The last two words are important in Mr. Naylor's case; if the gallant Lieutenant-Colonel was in the usual sense off duty (and if not, what was he doing in the lounge?) he was acting without authority.

Moreover, the National Registration Regulations were not intended as a means by which military men or constables might impose a personal censorship upon conversations of which they happened to disapprove. For obvious reasons the law makes no attempt to define the circumstances in which identity cards may be called for; and the deficiency is made good by local supplementary instruction, which appears to be more intelligently absorbed in the case of constables than in that of Lieutenant Colonels. "Alarm and despondency" prosecutions have practically died out, but of course if you want to report someone to the Director of Public Prosecutions under Regulation 39BA you need his name and address, and there is a reasonable hope that the one on his identity card will be correct.

This brings me to the fact that even if Mr. Naylor's challenger had been a constable, he was entitled to say "No, I shall not show you my identity card, because I don't like the tone of your conversation either; but I will produce it at so-and-so police station to-morrow, and you can have my name and address if you like." If he withheld his name and address from a constable who asked him for it in the circumstances described he would commit an offence which is quite distinct from the question of producing his card; in withholding it from a military man who was not on duty he would be quite safe.

The powers of the police and the services are pretty wide at the moment, but they are as nothing compared with the amount of bluff being put over on the citizen. The solution for Mr. Naylor is to carry Halsbury's *Laws of England* and Butterworth's *Emergency Legislation Service* around with him; they go comfortably into two fair-sized suit cases. C. R. HEWITT

ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS.

SIR,—The NEW STATESMAN AND NATION has been good enough to devote two articles by "J. S." to the first Time-Life-Fortune Committee Report, *Relations with Britain.* The author is right in stating that British and American commentators should discuss each other's proposals with the utmost frankness. It is also essential that they discuss them with scrupulous accuracy. This your writer has not done. He insists that the report calls for the restoration of an "unmodified capitalism"; that under our proposed Anglo-American agreement it would be impossible for the British (or the American) Government "to attempt such measures as the combating of unemployment, the maintenance of agricultural production at a given level, or the preservation of industries considered necessary for defence."

The whole thesis of these articles is that the Time-Life-Fortune proposals would make Britain a capitalist colony of the U.S., particularly as, according to "J.S.," the report provides for no "merging of the political institutions of the two countries."

Now such statements misrepresent the proposals under discussion. Instead of providing for the restoration of an "unmodified capitalism," they advocate drastic changes in the capitalism of the past: first, by obliging enterprise to accept price competition in an ever-enlarging area of life so as to break down the monopolies which the Socialist—mistakenly—says are inherent in the capitalist structure; second, by creating over-all government responsibility for combating unemployment. While our report does propose post-war free trade between Britain and America within an ever-enlarging area, it provides specifically for "permanent international regulation in the case of aviation, shipping and certain fields of raw materials." It likewise provides that the British and American Governments agree as to common demobilisation and anti-depression policies, so as "to prevent a sudden speculative boom from being followed by a violent collapse." Far from tying the hands of the British Government as to internal economic policy, the report states "The U.S. and Britain would not have to agree (for example) on a common housing programme, but consultation should take place to see to it that the fiscal policies adopted in support of such a programme in one country would parallel those adopted generally in the other."

Likewise the report provides for the creation of a series of joint Anglo-American committees, which if successful would develop into the common political institutions "J. S." supposedly favours. Thus it provides for a joint Foreign Trade Council, and a series of Anglo-American committees and conferences to develop parallel policies in the most important domestic fields. "J. S." says he is in favour of complete Federal Union. He does not seem to realise that in Federal Union, Britain would be outvoted by the more numerously populated U.S.

It is not difficult to understand why powerful American interests should vigorously oppose our suggestion that British goods be given a free post-war market in the U.S. It is hard to understand why "J. S." should do so. Merely to maintain its pre-war standard of living—let alone adopt the principles of the Beveridge Report—Britain will be confronted with the colossal task of greatly increasing its exports over the 1938 level, in view of its dwindling foreign investments and merchant marine. Despite this difficult problem, "J. S." says "no thank you" to our proposal for expanding British exports at the expense of American vested interests.

It is clear that "J. S." is a Socialist who is congenitally opposed to any "reformist" proposal which will give new life to capitalism whose death he so ardently awaits. This is not the place to debate this issue, except to express the passing belief that orthodox Socialism is just as dead as nineteenth century capitalism. But we hope that you will agree that Anglo-American relations cannot thrive on misrepresentation, whether from Left or Right, and that you will publish this letter giving your readers a more accurate summary of our proposals.

RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL,
Time, Incorporated, New York City.

ELECTRICITY IN THE HIGHLANDS

SIR,—There is one aspect of hydro-electrification whether in the Highlands or elsewhere which none of your correspondents have touched upon, and that is its effect on electricity generation in the country as a whole. In all our planning, whether for re-housing, location of industry or rural development, one essential ingredient is a cheap and abundant supply of electricity. If we plan the ends we must be willing to plan the means, and if we are to have Beveridge security, higher wages, shorter hours and labour-saving houses we must have a greater output per man-hour, and this means higher mechanisation and much greater electrical power than anything we have at present. Until this electricity can be had by the wave of an atom-splitting fairy wand it must be won by various means, all more or less hard and unpleasant, and the reformer who objects to these means should state his (or her) alternative.

Electricity on a large scale now comes only from two sources—coal and water power. The former involves the underground labour of many men in perpetuity, the latter involves the above-ground labour of still more men for a definite period—or, in other words, the locking-up of large quantities of capital. The choice between them (or rather the proportions of that choice) is a matter for the community as a whole to decide after full consideration of the complicated technical, economic and personal factors involved. Once that decision has been taken it is surely not Fascism but common-sense democracy that it should not be put aside by sectional interests, whether sporting, mining or any other. In this country, so far, the decision (thanks to our geography and our minerals) has been to use coal for 98 per cent. of our public electricity supplies, and this may have something to do with the fact that whilst most commodity prices have risen a mere fifty per cent. or so,

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coal for electricity generation has risen something like three-hundred per cent.

What is to be the answer to the conundrum, dear coal—cheap electricity, and how are we to multiply our electrical output without a great increase in mining labour? One partial answer (unfortunately it can be only a small part) is hydro-electrification. The output forecast in the Cooper report (4,000 million units) together with the output obtainable from the Severn barrage scheme (2,000 million) would be the equivalent of four million tons of coal per annum, or the labour in perpetuity of some 12,000 miners working underground. Even though a considerable proportion of this were consumed in chemical industries on the spot, the amount available for export into the general supply system might be a material alleviation of what promises to be a serious drag upon progress. D. J. BOLTON

SIR,—Electrification is a means, not an end. You rightly observe that to foist on the Highlands an immense scheme of hydro-electric development which bears no relation to any properly co-ordinated plan for that area's economic and social resuscitation is "putting the cart before the horse." One of the many peculiar features of the Cooper Report is that the Committee seems never to have inquired whether the cart—in the shape of privately-owned (but indirectly State-subsidised) electro-chemical and electro-metallurgical factories—will have four wheels on which to travel. Not merely will all the raw materials for these factories have to be imported; the products will have to be sold in a world market whose prospective supplies, thanks to war-stimulated developments in Canada and the United States—to say nothing of Norway and Switzerland, Lancashire and South Wales—may easily exceed demand. Or does the Government propose, if need be, to embark on a series of tariff-*cum*-quota wars in order to protect the sole progeny of this hastily considered scheme, whose beneficiaries are not the people of the Highlands, but the influential contracting interests whose post-war order-books will be graced by the profitable job of devastating Glen Affric? AYLMER VALLANCE

SOCIAL SCIENCE AND DOCUMENTARY

SIR,—One general point arising from Stonier's kind and constructive review of Mass Observation, "The Pub and the People." He feels we should discard the scientific for the documentary. This friendly advice *cannot* be taken, even if we would. Science *is* documentary, in its initial stages, and good documentary is scientific—the description of facts, the objective account, the demonstrably accurate, the intelligible synthesis of experience. This is clear enough when we study birds and mice, as I used to do. It becomes obscured by etymological and psychological factors when we apply science to ourselves. One would never think of needing the word documentary for any study of robins or rabbits. The whole "documentary movement" has been a reaction away from the creative, intuitive, personal, philosophical methods of artistic synthesis, towards something nearer the tempo of natural science.

M.O. would be cowardly, though more comfortable, if it appeared to content itself with only the first stage of social study, documentary. All students of human affairs have to try, however feebly, to go further, into interpreting the reports and develop these bases on described facts. This is a terribly tricky job, as Stonier sees. To-day few jobs are more urgent for the wise future of our civilisation. It is to be deplored that the difficulties put off most people from trying, and the critics put off some of the rest. TOM HARRISSON

WOMEN IN WAR WORK

SIR,—Your editorial gave timely publicity to the degeneration of the activities of the Ministry of Labour and National Service into senseless changing of people's jobs at the whim of their temporary clerks. My experience in the office of a very large education authority bears out the crying need for someone to put an end to the chaos the Ministry is causing.

Opinion differs as to the importance in war of education, but one assumes that the Government believes in it. At all events even the Minister of Labour would agree that training for industry, pre-serve training for the Forces, the provision of nursery schools and of school canteens are contributions to the war effort: nothing merely cultural about them!

Education has to be administered. Nearly all the men have been called up, and now the local Labour Exchange is compelling us to give up young women who in a year have learned to carry out the responsible administrative routine of men clerks. One would have thought that the need for young women in the Services would have been the reason. It is not so. I give five cases:

(*a*) Girl of 20 able to conduct correspondence and interviews on scholarships and examinations was called to the Exchange and, without being asked about her present work, told she could not remain in the Education Office, but must go to a Government laboratory to do statistical work.

(*b*) Girl who had mastered the intricacies of teachers' salaries and had a grasp of the staffing of all schools was told by the Exchange to get "war work" within a month. In this case we counter-attacked by making her an uncertificated teacher, and later sending her to college.

(*c*) Wife of a soldier doing general office work told to leave and get "war work," and was left unemployed for several weeks.

(*d*) Girl in accounts department told to leave, and was placed in an inland revenue office (promotion from rates to taxes!)

(*e*) Girl in supplies department was "directed" to a factory. Discharged after an accident there, she took a post in a solicitor's office. The local representative of the Minister of Labour and National Service took her out of that and placed her in a beauty parlour.

These cases are merely samples. None of the girls were required for the women's services; the time taken in learning their local government work has been wasted, they have not gone to more important "war work," and, by leaving it, they reduced for a period the efficiency of the education service.

It is really monstrous that responsible local government services should be thus sabotaged by the minions of the Minister of Labour and National Service.

EDUCATION OFFICER

THE BOOKSELLER

SIR,—The plea made by Mr. Hubert Wilson for the exemption of enough skilled booksellers to maintain the essential public service of bookselling will certainly be endorsed by all book buyers. Evidence of a growing "bottleneck" in book distribution accumulates daily at the offices of the National Book Council, where a short-staffed Inquiries Bureau is trying to meet nation-wide demands for book information which would be met in normal times by experienced bookshop assistants.

Sufficient emphasis cannot be laid on the point made by Mr. Wilson that almost every person buying books to help them do their particular war job *needs advice*. For such book buyers the services of an experienced bookseller or assistant are essential. A continuation of the present calling up of the few remaining skilled persons in bookselling must inevitably result in isolating many members of the community from that free access to books, and to information about books, which is vital to a live democracy. The dramatised book-bonfires in Berlin cannot have had more effect in depriving men of books than a call-up policy which will close many bookshops and reduce others to the position of being able to handle only those poor books which can be handled without technical or literary knowledge of any kind.

MAURICE MARSTON,
Secretary,
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by C. Aspinall-Oglander.
12s. 6d.

The life and letters of the famous Fanny Boscawen, after the death of her husband, Pitt's favourite Admiral. *The Times Literary Supplement*, in a front page review, said of the letters that extracts "cannot convey more than a glimmering of the quality which grows steadily on the perception of the reader—their great charm."

BOOKS IN GENERAL

It is a common impulse, when we particularly admire a current writer, to predict immortality for his work. The presumption that the taste of the future will be enlightened seems to me a little rash, for we may be tumbling into an Age of Faith in which beauty, learning, reason, and the glories of the past will be as nearly obscured as they were after the collapse of Rome. When we pretend to anticipate the applause of posterity, what we really mean is that a writer possesses some of the virtues that have hitherto proved most preservative. And here, I suggest, we need to discriminate between two sorts of "immortality." There are books that we continue to read, and others that we merely venerate for their contribution to thought or feeling. The *Novum Organum*, the *Encyclopédie, La Nouvelle Heloïse*, for instance, have been among the most potent of human constructions—but who now reads them? The more successful a prophet, the more liable he is to lose his audience. The ideas persist, enlarged or disfigured, the name is large in history, the statue looms above the traffic, but the books attract only the specialist and the spider. Of Bacon we read only the Essays, of Voltaire and Diderot the stories, of Rousseau the Confessions. For it is not ideas that keep old books alive, it is poetic imagination or liveliness in portraiture or just style.

If we attempt this distinction when we amuse ourselves with predictions of immortality, the results may seem paradoxical. Thus of living English writers Mr. Shaw and Mr. Wells have been, I make no doubt, the most influential. But if we are looking for the books likely to be not only respected but enjoyed by posterity, it may be wiser to leave the thoroughfares—these are always being rebuilt—and to pry into less-frequented places: squares with a few benches mottled by the shadows of the plane-trees or gardens with moss-bearded fountains to which the urban hubbub drifts only like the soughing of the wind. Thus auspiciously aloof are two writers that I would judge least unlikely to persist into the future, Sir Max Beerbohm and Mr. Norman Douglas. I don't suggest that either will ever be considered "great": it is doubtful if they would wish, any more than Landor did, for the acclamations of the populace; they would gratefully leave to others the task of setting the Thames on fire, or the Mississippi or the Volga. But with a few grandiose exceptions, authors—at any rate authors of prose—can hope to engage only a small group of readers in each generation, as Browne has done and Aubrey and Horace Walpole and De Quincey and Peacock. In such society there are places reserved, I suggest, for the proudly unassuming figures of Sir Max and Mr. Douglas.

Most of Mr. Douglas's books are still is print, and *South Wind* has just been reissued with a new preface by the author (Secker and Warburg, 8s. 6d.). This is not my favourite among Mr. Douglas's books, for it has already suffered a little from the dilapidation that Time inflicts upon the novel of ideas. "Not that I've any objection, in principle, to incest; it strikes me as the most natural proceeding in the world"—such a remark has since 1917 lost its pungency. If Mr. Douglas wrote with one eye on Peacock, Mr. Aldous Huxley wrote with two eyes on Mr. Douglas. The talk in *South Wind* is first rate, but so it is in *Antic Hay*, and we have now become rather *blasé*. Yet *South Wind* is more than a conversation piece; indeed, in plot it resembles the best of modern English novels, *The Ambassadors*. The Bishop, like Struther, is so worked upon by the spirit of place that all his values change: he comes to disregard a murder just as Struther comes to applaud an adultery. "What does it mean?" Mr. Keith sums up, "Only that you are growing up . . ." *South Wind* is much less shapely than *The Ambassadors*; the action is not always seen through the Bishop's eyes, nor is there a Chad performing a *chassé-croisé*. On the other hand, the genius loci is far more richly realised. The reader of Henry James has to fill out from his own knowledge of French society the delicate hints doled out by the author, but we know, from what we are told and with all our senses, the atmosphere of Mr. Douglas's island.

South Wind can be taken as a summary of Mr. Douglas's meridional experiences, but for my part I prefer the more direct and fuller accounts offered by the travel books in *Siren Land, Old Calabria, Fountains in the Sand, Alone* and *Together*. The last two are the most accomplished. *Siren Land*, for instance, is sometimes affected and tiresomely tinged with Pater; the first chapter of my favourite, *Old Calabria*, which assumes that everyone is intimate with the details of Hohenstaufen history, must have alienated many innocent readers. But while Mr. Douglas increased his mastery of presentation and his limpidity of style he became more pernickety; always sardonic, in his later books he grows querulous. There was a War; wine and food were increasingly adulterated—in fact the world was going to the dogs. Moreover, the blithe paganism for which he has been so earnest a missionary becomes less empirically adequate as the joints grow stiffer: Mr. Douglas has always been a hedonist rather than a stoic. His hedonism, however, is severely Attic. To a Chambertin or a Richebourg served on a table designed by Riesener he prefers any honest Italian wine, so it be served by a curly-pated Capriote under a pergola of vines, with a view down through woods to a peacock bay. Above all he is the most erudite of hedonists. He combines more fully than any other living writer an appetite for simple pleasures with a devotion to scholarship. Moreover, his learning is in the high catholic manner of the Renaissance: he is addicted alike to the classical authors and to the natural sciences. Consequently in these travel-books we are treated to the companionship of a man astonishingly, perhaps indeed uniquely, well educated. Birds, insects, plants, minerals, wines, antiquities, and the young of *homo sapiens* are among the subjects on which he speaks with the authority of a specialist. He loves groves and fountains, twenty-hour walks and loafing, shepherd-pipes and all the apparatus of the Eclogue. He hates Switzerland and the Riviera, industrialism and puritanism and bureaucracy. He depicts Southern Italy already oppressed before Fascism by locust-swarms of pestilential officials. The concept of human equality he smiles at as a foolish myth, but he venerates liberty and practises fraternity.

Mr. Douglas is a lonely survivor, an alien to our age—which helps to explain why his extraordinary gifts have gained neither wide popularity nor academic recognition. I doubt if he has enjoyed any music later than Brahms, any painting later than Böcklin. He is a stranger to the anguish exhaled by the artifacts of the twentieth century, the paintings of Picasso, the music of Bloch, the writings of Joyce. He would indeed dismiss such self-tormentors, I think, as the morbid victims of a hostile climate and adulterated food. Yet it is noticeable that in the blessed climes that he has chosen to inhabit men live no less miserably. Nowhere, except in Murcia, have I seen such lamentable wretches as in Sicily, in Apulia, and in the country round Sorrento. Mr. Douglas himself gives a hideous account of Calabria, throwing much of the blame on old Bourbon misgovernment. Perhaps to retain initiative and self-respect in these Circean regions one needs to be, like Mr. Douglas, a Scot.

His hostility to our age has, moreover, lent him prophetic foresight. In 1917 he wrote: "We shall all be pro-German again to-morrow." In 1911:

> Has any good ever come out of that foul-clustering town-proletariat, beloved of humanitarians? Nothing—never; they are only waiting for a leader, some "inspired idiot," to rend to pieces our poor civilisation.

In 1916:

> We are ripe for a new Messiah, like these Russians. We are not Europeans. We are Indian fakirs, self-torturers. We are a pack of masochists. That is what upstairs gods have done for us. Listen, Heard!

In this context does not even the name "Heard" seem an alarming anticipation?

Mr. Douglas has put a definition of his own style into the mouth of an imaginary sixteenth-century historian:

> Portraiture of characters and events should take the form of one gentleman conversing with another, in the easy tone of good society. The author who sets out to address a crowd defeats his own object: he eliminates the essence of good writing—frankness. You cannot be frank with men of low condition. You must presuppose a refined and congenial listener, a man or woman whom you would hesitate to take by the hand and lead into the circle of your own personal friends.

Consequently when I applaud Mr. Douglas's consummate style, I can offer no specimens of the purple patch. The shimmering, translucent fabric has never been patched. I know of no living English writer who has a more exact and unobtrusive command of diction. After four or five readings, I consider *They Went* the most perfect of Mr. Douglas's books, though the fable is not explicit enough ever to be popular. Evidently it betokens the conflict between Paganism and Christianity, the aesthetic and ethical principles, but I think the interpretation is better left vague, the moral undrawn. In front of the National Gallery Bronzino or the Bellini Allegories in the Accademia one is content to accept the imagery for its loveliness without worrying much about its significance. *They Went* takes us to a legendary Breton port with a toping monarch, a feminist Druidess, a cruel and beautiful princess, a Christian missionary, and a Greek architect who is Satan. The most obvious influence is Renan, but an occasional ribaldry suggests rather *Le Roi Pausole*. With curious art the author manages the repetition of certain phrases, "They went," "A shipload of young sailor-boys," "A portico is worth a preacher." This is one of those works of art which seem to gain added brilliance from their miniature scale.

That classical education, like cricket, should be reserved for the minority capable of enjoying it I do not doubt. I am no less confident that most embryo writers will profit, if they are given the chance, from intimacy with the great Latins and still more the great Greeks. Mr. Douglas more than any other living artist has naturalised himself in the antique world. He has made pilgrimages in the tracks of Horace, and has compiled an enchanting notebook on the Birds and Beasts of the Greek Anthology. He has in fact modelled his ways of living as well as of thinking upon the texts introduced to him in his boyhood. If Latin and Greek are allowed to dwindle into languages like Hebrew and Chinese, reserved for specialists, the future of English literature will, I conclude, be grimly impoverished.

Raymond Mortimer

THE SLEEP-WALKING YEARS

The Weald of Youth. By Siegfried Sassoon. *Faber & Faber.* 8s. 6d.

For this new instalment of his autobiography Mr. Sassoon has gone back to those sleep-walking years between the ages of 18 and 24, years of youth which for most of us are embarrassing to remember and difficult to describe. The novelists who choose this age for their heroes get over the difficulty of asking us to admire their half-baked and formless young men by giving them the minds and experience of people ten years older. The honest writer of autobiography has no such escape. He has to record the callowness and the yawning shames of those years, and in doing so somehow has to marry a puny experience of life to youth's fervid and boundless bodily feeling of being swept into some festive and universal rite. The feast of youth is everything, the young man is hardly anything at all.

Mr. Sassoon treats this reticent and mooning ghost of his with less of the patronage, the finger-wagging indulgence or the ridicule which commonly ruin such self-portraits. A little is unavoidable, for in England we have an unnatural terror of being thought prigs. Mr. Sassoon has brought back, too, that quiet sheltered world in which he lived between 1910 and 1914 and, comparing his with other lives we know of, how sheltered it was. It was exceptionally sheltered, by his class and its cultural interests. The unrest of the Balkan wars of that time does not seem to have penetrated his mind. There was no sense of fight or struggle for existence in either a private or public sense, so that the European war when it caught him bicycling across his charmed Kent to Winchelsea, seemed like a chivalrous visitation and not a gross, public intensification of what, for the mass of people, was the private theme of their lives. Poetry, music, dancing, hunting, golf, motoring and meeting people were the pleasant bounds of a life shyly directed towards a prosaic private excellence. The poems, derived from this or that literary source, are written, they are privately printed, handsomely bound—and then burned in despair. A poetic wolf in sheep's clothing, Mr. Sassoon goes out to play golf or ride with his elders ; and if he is more interesting about sport than about his development as a poet, the reason seems to be, as he says, that there were so very few things about which he could feel poetical. What he must have observed with more intensity than he knew was the quiet round of life in country society, for of this he gives a picture which sinks its dull, green English colours deeply into the mind. His horses are a good deal more vivid than his people, who have an old-maidishness about them, even when drinking champagne at the races or recommending a new puncture-proof substance for injecting into motor tyres. Here is Cockbird :

> (Cockbird) was extremely good-looking, and possessed all the points which go to make a first-rate hunter. His beautiful sloping shoulders were in themselves a guarantee that he would give one a comfortable ride, and his action was so smooth that one scarcely felt him moving while he galloped. When he came to a fence he shortened his stride and slipped over it, always jumping very big and getting away with unfaltering fluency after he landed. Besides being a natural jumper he had a perfect mouth, going well into his bridle without ever seeming to catch hold. He was, in fact, " a patent safety " and had a fine constitution. . . . Altogether I rode him in 11 races of which he won 4, in spite of a tendency to run out left-handed into the crowd after he sailed over the last obstacle.

Cockbird's story is long and amusing.

There are three other portraits which are in a class with Cockbird's—the pictures of the Gosses and T. W. H. Crosland, that buccaneering editor and secret gambler, who had modelled himself on the lamentable model of W. E. Henley. Every writer meets his Crosland and the account of the shy poet's relations with the battered journalist who roars and guzzles with authority, but is furtively planning to borrow half a crown, is delightful. This is one of Mr. Sassoon's good moments. He has described the supreme difficulty of being young : you are never quite sure where you are with your elders. A point on which both sides are apt to be touchy. The Gosses are a gift to those with a taste for domestic comedy and Mr. Sassoon tackles them at their parties :

> That bearded man with the large jovial laugh who was hob-nobbing with my mother on a sofa—could he be Alma Tadema ? I wondered. And if so, was she talking to him about his picture of Moses among the Bulrushes—a work from which he had for once omitted his usual flight of marble steps ? . . . There was one little incident which made me feel more my natural self ; this was when Mrs. Gosse, who was moving about in her unruffled way, paused beside me and drew my attention to a voluminous middle-aged lady in a huge feathery hat. ' That is " Answer me with those azure eyes " ' she murmured, with subdued playfulness in her look, recalling to my mind the American poetess of whom she had spoken last summer, whose exuberant admiration for Mr. Gosse had caused her to address him thus in a sonnet.

There is Mr. Gosse bowing and cooing to an Ambassador and covering him with " Your Excellency's." There is Mr. Gosse trying not to discuss Things that Matter with Mr. Filson Young. And there is one of those " dropped bricks " which drops all the more pleasantly because it fell at Mr. Gosse's table :

> The meal began with a minor mistake on my part which serves well to illustrate my confused mental condition. Mr. Gosse, with emphatic archness, intimated that he was expecting me to give my fullest appreciation to his hermitage. Dimly wondering why he was referring to his house in Regent's Park as a hermitage, and why he pronounced the word with a sort of French accent, I replied—with stupefied jocosity—that it seemed to be a nice big one ! ' Not unbecomingly large, I hope,' he somewhat tartly replied, looking inquiringly at the bottle in front of him from which he was about to fill our glasses.

The poetic pace grows hotter as Eddie Marsh, Rupert Brooke and Ralph Hodgson come on the scene and Mr. Sassoon, taking a huge plunge, gets rooms in Raymond's Buildings and goes to the Russian ballet. Tentative, cautious, shy and slow, this nice young man moved without confidence towards the inferno.

V. S. PRITCHETT

LANDSCAPE WITH FIGURE

The Colossus of Maroussi. By HENRY MILLER. *Secker and Warburg.* 8s. 6d.

Henry Miller went to Greece in the summer of 1939 and spent about six months there, staying in Athens and Corfu and making the usual trips to the Argolid, Sparta, Delphi, Crete and one or two other islands. He enjoyed Greece, as many before him, prodigiously. He enjoyed the landscape, the people and the light—above all the light ; the excitement with which he writes about that is an alarum to memory. In the people he discovered a unique warmth and dignity ; those who know Greece will not quarrel with him over that. The landscape he found dazzling ; many will know with how much reason. Admiration for Greece would in itself evoke only sympathy in the reader. Mr. Miller, however, feels the need not so much for admiration as for convulsion. Mycenæ revived for him an antediluvian past, " first heavy-footed, slow, sluggish, ponderous, thought embodied in dinosaurian frames, war reared in anthropophagous luxury, reptilian, ataraxic, stunning and stunned." In the Theban plain he found a " belly of emptiness," in which " there throbbed a rich pulse of blood which was drained off in black furrowed veins." On the way to Phaestos, on the other hand, he ran across " a piece of the Absolute, bald as an eagle's knob, hideous as the leer of a hyena, impotent as a granite hybrid. Here nature staggered to a halt in a frozen vomit of hate." The physical aspect of Greece to him was in turn Biblical, Indian, American Indian, Arabian, Japanese, Egyptian, Mongolian, Aztec and Dickensian ; no matter, amidst these international spectacles he found the cure for mankind : " to give up, to relinquish, to surrender, so that our little hearts may beat in unison with the great heart of the world."

The book gives us, in fact, a landscape with figure, a figure " in a state of dazed, drunken, battered stupefaction " (and no wonder) : the figure of Mr. Miller. The writer presents a self-portrait almost as Protean as his background. At one moment, loyal as Mrs. Micawber, he bids the world have its bath of blood, he will cling to Poros ; at another he is doing a bit of " fancy skating in my shoes " in the new pavilion at Delphi. At Hydra he becomes one with " the Path " ; in Corfu, in the company of the local gendarme, he feels so good that he will " stand on the table and sing in some unknown language or hop from the table to the commode and from the commode to the staircase or swing from the

KRISHNAMURTI

" The world is an extension of yourself. If you as an individual desire to destroy hate, then you as an individual must cease hating. To destroy hate, you must dissociate yourself from hate in all its gross and subtle forms ; so long as you are caught up in it, you are part of the world of ignorance and fear. The world does not exist apart from the individual. His ignorance, his greed, his fear, maintain the whole structure of ignorance, greed and hate. Lasting order and peace can be brought about only when the individual voluntarily and intelligently consents to think without hate, without greed, without fear."

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rafters, anything to entertain him, keep him amused, make him roll from side to side with laughter"; or sometimes he just sports with a village mayor in the sea, "where we bit one another like crabs." His politics are as erratic. Pro-Greek as he is, now and again he lets out something which a Greek (or an Albanian) audience would scarcely appreciate:

> You look at a place like Albania—it was constantly staring me in the eyes—and you say to yourself, yesterday it was Greek, to-day it's Italian, to-morrow it may be German or Japanese, and you let it be anything it chooses to be. When you're right with yourself it doesn't matter what flag is flying over your head or who owns what or whether you speak English or Monongahela.

On the other hand, after sliding gaily over somebody's recital of the Smyrna disaster ("Evidently the disaster had occurred during one of those long intervals when I had ceased to read the newspapers. I hadn't the faintest recollection of any such catastrophe"), fifty or so pages later he is overcome by indignation at the brevity of human memory: "The Smyrna affair, which far outweighs the horrors of the first world war or even the present one, has been somehow soft-pedalled and almost expunged from the memory of present-day man"; and he primly refers the reader to the Department of State Papers. And so it goes on. He loves the Greeks, but on condition that they keep right on living in their own country: a Greek who has had the hardihood to run a candy store in New York becomes almost automatically a "dirty baboon." Epidaurus is "the intangible residue of the miraculous surge of the human spirit," Mycenæ is "one of the navels of the human spirit," all Greece is a Book of Revelation; but when a Cretan village ventures to embellish "its meagre, stultified life by the adoption of telephone, radio, automobile, tractor, et cetera," Mr. Miller begins twaddling about "sporadic agglomerations of beings . . . beneath any known level of life which this globe has known."

Mr. Miller, in short, is crazy about the cosmic. It is only fair to point out that *The Colossus of Maroussi* was, apparently, written before the entry of Greece into the war. It is also only fair to point out that since it was written a good many of those sporadic agglomerations of beings have taken their meagre, stultified lives in their hands and shown the world how to die. There is, however, no sign in this noisy and inflated writing that Mr. Miller would have been interested in anything as simple as human heroism.

DILYS POWELL

SURVIVORS' TALE

They Were Expendable. By W. L. WHITE. *Hamish Hamilton.* 6s.

War has produced many new nightmares. Here is one. You are travelling on a small torpedo boat, a cockleshell of wood with little in the way of armament, and at dawn you enter a long narrow channel. All seems set fair.

> So there we were, fat, dumb, and happy, heading up the narrow channel at fifteen knots, when all of a sudden—Wham! It was a hundred-pound bomb which crashed about ten feet off our bow. It blew a hole into the crew's washroom you could walk through. It tore the port machine gun off its stand. It blew all the wind-shields in and covered us with water and mud. . . .
>
> Then I looked up, and here a second plane was peeling off, coming out of a cloud . . . I had to throttle back, stopping the boat momentarily so that the next bomb would land twenty-five feet in front instead of squarely on us . . .
>
> They bombed us for thirty minutes, and the farthest bomb was thirty feet away. We would wait for the bomb release, see it start falling, then I'd give hard rudder and it would miss by a few feet All the while we had to keep in this narrow channel so we wouldn't be beached helplessly on a coral reef, and work our way down it towards port . . .

This is only one episode in the endless nightmare of Jap attack in the Philippines so casually and forcibly recounted in *They Were Expendable.* "Expendable" is the word for men or material thrown away to stem the enemy's advance, and "they" included four officers, survivors from a band of seventy, of an American Motor Torpedo Boat flotilla. The defencelessness of these little boats, in the face of massed Japanese aeroplanes and warships, makes the story more staggering; even the machine-gun shields were made of wood, and yet they managed to bring down planes and sink cruisers and landing craft; and among other feats conveyed General MacArthur on the first and most dangerous stage of his journey from the Philippines to Australia. After a few pages hair's-breadth escapes are taken for granted. The narrator describes crouching in a hedge while the Japs go by on bicycles or being fixed in the searchlight from an enemy cruiser as though these were incidents in a run of Hare and Hounds. Not that the method of *They Were Expendable* is consciously "tough"; on the contrary, Mr. W. L. White merely gets the four officers talking and out comes their story as plain as daylight. The authorship is brilliantly unobtrusive. It is a book without any trimmings that will stand with *Two Survived* among the personal sagas of the war.

G. W. STONIER

NEW NOVELS

Darkness Falls from the Air. By NIGEL BALCHIN. *Collins.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Cloven Pine. By FRANK CLARE. *Secker & Warburg.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

We Shall Return. By JACK LINDSAY. *Dakers.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

All the three novels under review deal with the present or the immediate past. Their relative merit depends, not unexpectedly, on the degree to which external events have been subordinated to a transcendant theme. In Mr. Balchin's book the Blitz and the Civil Service are the vivid framework of an external situation, while Mr. Lindsay's is frankly entitled "A Novel of Dunkirk and the French Campaign." The realist fallacy dies hard. Zola was too good a novelist to conform to his own rules, and *La Débacle* is not read as a social study of 1870, but as an immortal picture of men fighting, of emotions and behaviour which are true of any war. Not that the topical detail can be neglected. It is the keen observation of distinction which savours the deeper similarity. The exact description of a shell-burst at Sevastopol gives a peculiar additional credibility to the fears and heroism of Tolstoy's soldiers. When shell-bursts are forgotten the realism of the observed detail will still make its startling and necessary effect. But in Tolstoy the perspective is hardly ever lost, and in Zola far less than his proclamations would suggest.

Darkness Falls from the Air is admirably balanced between context and story, between temporary detail and timeless situation. The Blitz was a bold background to choose, for nothing could be more intrusive, no background could make more importunate demands. Mr. Balchin has done well to keep the bombs in their place. He has used them solely to serve the interests of his story, and they are most efficient servants. They would be intolerable masters.

There are three concentric themes to the book. In the centre is the Triangle of Sarratt, the Civil Servant, his wife Marcia and Stephen the poet. Round that is built the theme of Sarratt's work in the ministry, and his tragi-comic struggle with corruption and bureaucracy. The background to all this is the early days of the Blitz, culminating in the City fire. Sarratt is the narrator of the story, and the book must be largely judged on an estimate of his character. At the beginning, and periodically throughout the novel, he is in danger of becoming the conventional tough hero.

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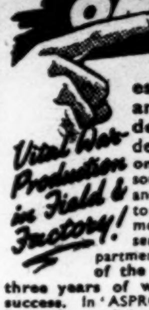
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Barneys (*medium*), Punchbowle (*full*), Parsons Pleasure (*mild*), 1 oz. 2/5d.

I had a drink and it went down very well, and I had another, and that went down well, too I told myself that I was beginning to drink too much, and ordered another and shut my eyes.

But Sarratt is too lucid and intelligent to fall into the punch-drunk baby-talk morass. Indeed, he is a somewhat idealised figure, efficient, thoughtful, industrious and decent-minded. But he is credible, as well as sympathetic, and this is undoubtedly the book that he would write.

Marcia and Stephen are less interesting, although the triangle situation is original, and essentially true. Stephen is too heavily caricatured. Such emotional crooks certainly exist, shameless in their demands for pity, outrageously threatening and even committing suicide. But they are seldom reputable poets, and seldom untouched by some acquired sense of ridicule. Marcia's motive for her affair with Stephen is mostly pity, and she would carry complete conviction if it were not for the unreality of the creature she pities. The conflict between the sane adult man and the hysterical neo-romantic is wonderfully well described; Sarratt's contemptuous dignity will be envied by many. His patience is admirable, and its limit is set at a just point. Indeed, the sordid little situation is ennobled by the hero's humanity and generosity.

Temporary civil servants will find it hard to judge the second theme without partiality. To them Sarratt will seem even more splendid as a civil servant than as a husband. His caustic efficiency will win adulation from those who have been too easily defeated in the same unequal battle. He is opposed by gross corruption operating on official timidity and incompetence. After a heroic struggle he is finally defeated on the same day that his wife is killed by a bomb.

The tragedies are not comparable, but the first is true and grim enough. And here, too, Mr. Balchin succeeds in describing an eternal crusade in terms which might easily have been purely topical and facetious. Yet for all the bitterness of these passages they are exceedingly funny.

A good book, indeed; though a strong protest must be lodged against the use of anti-Semitism as an aid to toughness.

The Cloven Pine suffers, after reading Mr. Balchin, from a certain lack of astringency. Here a little more toughness would have done no harm at all. Mr. Clare's theme is even bolder than Mr. Balchin's—no less than the gulf between the English and the German souls. His failure is no condemnation of the book, for it is in many ways a heroic failure. An English schoolmaster in Germany falls in love with a sixteen-year-old pupil, and the abortive cerebral relationship which follows is the framework on which the national souls are exposed.

Unfortunately the strands of adolescence and homosexuality get quite out of hand, and constantly threaten to infect the whole book with their sluggish sentiment. Here the general theme is much superior to the particular story. Götz, the German schoolboy, is a clever, at times a brilliant, interpretation, though never more credible than the shrewd reconstruction of an historical character. It is not surprising that he fails to carry complete conviction. But David Beaton is hardly more convincing. Indeed, each reads like a sympathetic portrait by a writer belonging to the other's country, but while Götz is a *tour de force*, Beaton should be much better. The method is in each case too simple. The mutual misconceptions are presented, and on each dummy figure thus created is grafted a certain number of contradictions and anomalies. Thus Beaton is prolific of condescension and understatement, but he is emotionally discursive. Götz is full of dark racial temperament, but he yearns for English sangfroid and tries to treat Nazis with contempt. The fault is clearly over-simplicity. It is impossible to make two individuals representative of anything so elusive and gigantic as the inherited temperament of their races. It is a theme for the lifetime of a skilled anthropologist.

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And yet Mr. Clare has made an honest if very limited contribution, and he could hardly have made it otherwise than in a novel.

The most remarkable thing about *We Shall Return* is that it is not as bad as it should be. Mr. Lindsay's apologia is horrific:

> The psychological tangle, shifting between personal and general, past and present, finds its solution not in any conscious dramatisation, but in the break of the old and the emergence of the new in the historical situation, so that I trust my hero does end, without ceasing to be himself, as the representative of forces cohering in that situation: his personal issues transcended, realised, within the dynamic of the national war effort, the necessary unity.

Apart from the propriety of stating an aim, apart from the mumbo-jumbo, the intention would seem to be flagrantly propagandist. Mr. Lindsay, however, is more interested in facts than in theories, and the book often achieves real linguistic vigour. It remains a clumsy enough canvas, massed with characters and events and conversations and reflections. There is no sign of the "necessary unity." Yet Lindsay wasn't, one gathers from his foreword, a spectator of these events. Indeed, this emerges clearly enough, for there is hardly a scene in the book which has the least touch of authenticity. He is deprived of the only possible excuse for choosing so dangerous a subject—the vividness of his own memories. And yet, though the story is lame and the scenes quite unconvincing, Mr. Lindsay, too, can transcend his realism. His imaginative vocabulary carries him on occasions far out of the morass of carefully acquired military detail. The pity is that Bren Carriers, L.M.G.'s and anti-tank rifles should always drag him back to their trivial level.

PHILIP TOYNBEE

The Nelson Touch. By CLEMENCE DANE. *Heinemann.* 15*s*.

Miss Clemence Dane was making an intensive study of *Mein Kampf* in a small French village in 1938 when her booksellers sent her by mistake the seven volumes of Nelson's Despatches and Letters. She found them a welcome relief, and has paid her debt by producing this volume of selections. In her opinion there is only one portrait of her hero "which shows the heroic virtues, the theatrical faults, the genius, the passion and the sweet, human foibles of the man, clear and duly proportioned, and that is the portrait which Nelson unconsciously painted of himself" in this correspondence. Nelson was certainly not the man to creep into a seven-volume shell of completely impersonal verbiage. He was not a civil servant and did not have to write like one; he was not a public schoolboy who had to be bashful about himself or facetious about what he had done; he was not an aristocrat, especially not, like Wellington, an Irish one, so that he did not need to be careful about his dignity and ready to snub anyone who threatened it. He was a parson's son from Norfolk, whose own career was a continual surprise and delight to him—a surprise and delight he was eager to share with anyone who would listen. He was a fighter who knew how to get his own way, and was afraid of no one. It would have been odd i he had not been able, when he chose, to say what h meant with point and vigour. Neither, however, w he in the same class as a writer of despatches or o anything else (especially not of love-letters) as he wa as a sailor. Why should he have been? He was goo enough at his own game—putting the fighting spiri into anything on the sea, from a cock-boat to a flee Did King David really write the Psalms?

* * *

We regret that in last week's review of *New Writin and Daylight* the names of two contributors, Ji Mucha and Demetrios Capetanakis, were misspelt.

Week-end Competitions

No. 679

Set by V. S. Pritchett

The usual prizes are offered for an imaginary postscript to a letter written by any two of th following:—Hitler, Henry James, Mussolini, Madame Blavatsky, Queen Victoria, Marie Lloyd, Surtees, Samuel Butler, the Duke of Wellington, Marcel Proust, Jane Austen, D. H. Lawrence, Noel Coward, George Moore.

RULES—

Envelopes should be marked with the numbe of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, an should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Grea Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Edito by first post on Monday February 15th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 676

Set by Fred Oyster

THE NEW STATESMAN & NATION recently published a column of aphorisms on the English character written by a Belgian living in London. Do we see ourselves as others see us? Competitors are invited to submit their own set of six aphorisms on our national character.

Report by Fred Oyster

Competitors reveal a venemous self-knowledge. Or they must enjoy looking down on their neighbours. Or it's easier to write sour than sweet. Or perhaps they are merely telling the truth. The result, at any rate, is unkindly.

I have tried to pick out aphorisms that combined common sense with tartness, and especially to discover the rare disinterested comment. There was a mass of material to choose from. The first prize of two guineas goes without question to Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith, whose "England, Our England" has the character and style one might expect from a master of gnomic elegance. (If it is objected that with eleven aphorisms he overruns the limit, I reply that he earns the prize with six, and the other five are thrown in gratis.) The next three, Terence de Vere White, E. W. Fordham, and Henry Kowal, running pretty level, receive prizes of 14s. each; and close after these come the field, from which I print first a selection.

The Englishman is innocently astute and thinks that what is to his own advantage must be seen by other men to be to their advantage also.

The Englishman thinks himself free from sentiment and cant but acts as if no other Englishman is.

(W. G. F.)

The British are masters of the soft answer which incites wrath. (J. R. SISSON)

This, to a man, the English faithfully hold—
That a bedroom, to be healthy, must be cold.

There's many a thing the Englishman can pardon:
But not a brutal indifference to his garden.

(V. H. FRIEDLAENDER)

Of food and literature the English produce the best and consume the worst.

Englishmen only appreciate an intellectual if he is also a comedian. Hence the Brains Trust and Bernard Shaw. (N. D.)

Even in sin they are conventional. They have a rigid code of immorals.

The English gentleman is always correct and never right.

England: the place where the people fawn on the dogs. (Edwin Allan)

The English hope for the best and defer for the worst.

In England truth often lies buried at the bottom of a "Well, well!" (Richard Pomfret)

The Englishman is always apologising for his feelings. He speaks of "pardonable emotion."

The English do not enjoy themselves; but, more than any other people they know how to make themselves comfortable. (Yahoo)

The strength of the English in war is that they have no faith in their generals. They expect them to fail and so nobody is rattled when they do.

Englishmen do not think about God: they are content in their belief that God thinks—not unfavourably—about them.

Sex is as pleasant to the Englishman as to everybody else. But, doubting whether it is quite the thing for ladies, he calls it, for their sakes, "unpleasant." The ladies being Englishwomen, what they think is not known. (L. E. J.)

An Englishman is proud of almost everything except his knees. (John Grant)

I fear we must winter in England this summer. (Emily Frazer)

Of all peoples the British are, collectively, the most boastful, individually, the most modest. (Sybil Fordham)

The proverbial lack of imagination of the English has its advantages; they never fancy cruelties or tortures. (T. E. Nef)

The Englishman is a good loser, but never knows when he is beaten. He would cheerfully congratulate his conqueror, if only he could recognise the existence of such a person. (L. V. Upward)

Englishmen brag about how little they brag about themselves. (Guy Innes)

To the English sleep is not merely a physiological necessity, but a sacred rite, not to be disturbed by anything. Hence the number of unhappy marriages. (Mrs. O. Haseltine)

An Englishman not only hates thinking, himself; but hates to think others are thinking. (Allan M. Laing)

In England class distinctions are very marked, while sex characteristics tend to disappear. (Marco Polo)

He thinks Perfidious Albion is either a character in Shakespeare or a proconsul roughly contemporary with Pontius Pilate. (D. W. Barker)

English light entertainment is commonly a tribute paid by virtue to vice. (Victor F. Honniball)

Our climate would be perfect if it provided winter sports.

A Nation of Shopkeepers would rather shut up shop than miss its half-holiday. (Sir Robert Witt)

PRIZES.

England, our England.

Among nations that all reek with Uplift and Boasting, the air of England is the only air a free spirit can breathe and not choke.

Englishmen who wear the wrong hats all land in the police court or gutter.

Our ancestors fled to the West in search of freedom. Their descendants flee back to find it in England.

The day before he became British, "To-morrow," I warned him, "an impulse to relate excremental stories will irresistibly seize you."

"But, Logan," Henry James replied, raising his hands to Heaven, "I don't know any!"

As we passed next day the fountain at Buckingham Palace, "Isn't it funny," I said, "to see that old lodging-house keeper sitting on top of the British Empire?"

"Remember, Logan," he answered in grave disapproval, "to whom you are speaking." Then he hurried to the Palace, took off his hat, and said, "I bow to my new sovereign."

Poor old "free, glorious England," as Freud (another distinguished refugee) has called it, with her beery national Anthem, and her three heroes—Shakespeare, Nelson and Gordon, whose statues she has to whitewash at least once a year!

Anyone seeking for unspotted Purity in England would not waste much time in its best public schools.

When on the death of John Brown a sycophantic Earl condoled with the Great Queen, "the Queen's hand," she replied, "shakes so that she can hardly answer his letter. For the second time her life has lost *all* that made it worth living.

"And to think that *only last week* he rolled me down the corridor!"

English people aren't hypocrites; the unchaste who praise chastity really believe in it.

"Don't do what I do," the B.B.C. bellows, "you do what I tell you."

If Shakespeare is dust, then is Warwickshire dust that was Shakespeare.

One felicity we refugees taste is unknown to those born in this island—the return after long years of the native, the end of the nostalgia we have suffered ever since the Mayflower sailed from Plymouth.

(Logan Pearsall Smith
American refugee)

An Englishman does not mind being called a fool. He knows he is not one: but beware of calling him a materialist.

That England is the most honourable nation might receive universal assent as a proposition were it not so often put forward as an axiom.

When God remembers the English he sends them a poet to make his apologies.

The English are a tolerant people; they are prepared to leave everyone alone including God.

The English are not immoral. They will not commit adultery if there is any other amusement available.

The English will always make friends and shake hands when a fight is over and they have won it. (Terence de Vere White)

The English regard a *cliché* as a sound, a proverb as a conclusive argument.

Most Englishmen would rather give a shilling to a stranger than speak to him.

Without a Royal Family the English would regard themselves as indecently exposed.

An Englishman is quite ready to die in saving his dog or in killing his fox.

The English are, for the most part, snobs who honestly believe they hate snobbery.

The English respect the *Times*, read the *Express*, and believe neither. (E. W. Fordham)

A Minute Course on English Character.

Although every Englishman is satisfied with himself, he is never boastful; he's too eager to listen to flattery.

Whenever an Englishman looks frightened, a woman is nearby, and he fears that she expects him to make love to her.

Brains, in the Englishman's opinion, are not for everyday use, but are precious resources that must be jealously stored and preserved until emergencies have become crises.

An Englishman's home is, of course, his castle. And its kitchen is the torture-chamber.

An Englishman is happiest when reflecting that his friends are socially superior to those of his neighbours.

The Englishman has one virtue. He's too concerned with his own affairs to go out of his way to make other people miserable. (Henry Kowal)

Will E. Lewis send his address and "Quack" his name and address.

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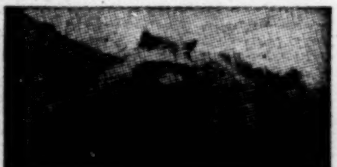
IN GREY OWL'S MEMORY



"How can any woman wear a trapped fur, knowing that every hair on that skin has vibrated with prolonged torture?" These were Grey Owl's words to me.

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